

SINO-PAK COLLUSION AND U.S. POLICY

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TAPAN DAS

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Preface

THIS BOOK is an attempt at studying Sino-US collusion with Pakistan since 1949 in the context of the victorious national liberation struggle of the people of East Bengal and the emergence of the Gana Prajatantri Bangladesh. The close political and economic relations between China and Pakistan have raised many eyebrows due to their conflicting ideologies and the latter's deep alignment with the USA. It has also been widely held that China and the USA are sworn enemies. With this view in mind, a brief evaluation has been made of the motivations and ideological compulsions of China in forging an entente with Pakistan.

It has been believed that China, in order to achieve its hegemonistic and nationalistic ambitions, induced Pakistan in conjunction with the USA to engage against India and the Soviet Union. China's insatiable desire to attain a cosy niche in the halls of the super-powers has also influenced its decision to endorse belligerent US actions and betray one of the greatest national liberation struggles of the world in the present epoch.

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New Delhi

TAPAN DAS

February 21, 1972

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CHAPTER ONE

Bangladesh and The New Entente

EMERGENCE OF A secular, democratic and independent Bangladesh has upset the balance of power in Asia just at a time when China and the United States have succeeded in evolving a new equation between themselves to play their respective self-chosen and mutually agreed roles in this continent and the world.

Both the countries—China, the biggest Asian power claiming to be the only true standard-bearer of socialism in the world, and the USA, world's biggest imperialist power claiming the right to refashion the social order in every Asian country (and the world) in its own image—have found their geopolitical interests converge in Pakistan.

The tragedy of the people of Pakistan, oppressed by a rapacious military junta, only intensified the urgency of the need to coordinate Sino-US schemes and plans. The declaration of independence by a majority of the people making up the country's eastern wing naturally upsets what these two big powers have been painstakingly building up all these years. The genocide in Bangladesh, mass murders, loot and rape, undertaken by the military junta of Islamabad, apparently at big powers' behest, could only be the last desperate attempt to salvage what was left of their plans. It is natural that they would be engaged in re-shaping their plans in this part of the Indian subcontinent and devising more diabolical schemes to

serve their geopolitical aims in Asia. The schemers in both China and USA would be chagrined at the utter failure of their plans which were obviously worked out without reckoning with the spirit of freedom sweeping the former imperialist colonies and the newly independent countries of the Third World.

Both China and the USA are shocked that their calculations about the future developments in this continent—with mutually agreed spheres of influence—have resulted only in utter failure, leading to the disintegration of Pakistan.

And this has happened even before they could give a final shape to those plans. If at one stage, the then President Ayub Khan of Pakistan had boasted of having played the role of an honest broker between Washington and Peking, it was mainly because of the need felt in Washington and Peking for a suitable spring-board in the subcontinent, what may be called, the soft underbelly of the Soviet Union. That accounts for the frantic efforts of both USA and China to prop up a bigoted military junta in West Pakistan, unmindful of the wishes of the people. It is as difficult for a Nixonian USA to ditch Pakistan (in the same way as Taiwan) after the debacle in Indo-China, as it is galling for the Maoist China to abandon the foothold it has established in the Indian subcontinent.

Thus, the pattern of schemes and plans woven around and through the developments of the past several years in Pakistan forms a major subject of study to understand this peculiar phenomenon of an imperialist country colluding with another claiming to be a "true" socialist state. We have to recognise their identity of interests that serve their common geopolitical objectives in this part of the world.

Much of what the USA has been doing in Pakistan is known in its broad outlines. But very little has been publicised about the Chinese aims and objectives in this part of the Indian subcontinent. And an understanding of these developments demands a study of the Chinese attitude and aid to Pakistan to discern the future direction of their policies in this subcontinent and the world.

Both the Chinese and American rulers guided by their hegemonistic and colonial ambitions, had been placating the rulers of Pakistan ever since its creation in 1947 to "teach a lesson" to their common enemies, the Soviet Union and India.

Bangladesh is a late development and both the world powers are interested to see that their strategies do not get upset in the new situation. Pakistan's crucial role in Chou-Kissinger meeting is not surprising and its role as a middle-man in the Sino-American detente has been adequately compensated. Its service in a crucial period of Bangladesh massacre could only be properly rewarded by providing more arms for butchering a few more millions of innocent human beings, who included among others, the supporters of both Chairman Mao and the Americans.

George McGovern, a US Democrat Senator, authoritatively asserted on July 28, 1971, that "arms were still being shipped to Pakistan in return for Pakistan's cooperation in arranging Dr Henry Kissinger's recent trip to Peking."

Pakistan occupied a unique position in the Sino-American strategy in South-East Asia and the hawks of Islamabad were assigned special role to achieve the aims of their allies. Both the Chinese and American policy-makers expressed in almost identical terms the importance of Pakistan in their official and non-official statements on more than one occasion.

It was as early as December 1951 when President Truman in his report to the Congress on Mutual Security Programme said: "Pakistan is one of the youngest nations, but already progressive (?) and powerful. Its friendship for the West may become an important factor in giving stability to the Near East. At the same time Pakistan is a valuable ally in South Asia because of its strategic location in the Indian Ocean and its control of land passes from Central Asia."¹

It was this observation which followed concerted efforts by the Americans for bringing Pakistan into its fold and it led to the significant visit of the then Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistani army, General Ayub Khan, to Washington in the fall of 1953. President Ayub grasped the meaning of the American plans in Asia and assured Pentagon of Pakistan's willingness to act "as one of the chief Asian bastions" of the United States and asked for his soldiers whom he considered "tough fighters" the arms "that Pakistan cannot produce."²

¹The Mutual Security Programme, First Report to Congress for the six months ending 31st December, 1951. Washington, 1952

²US News and World Report, October 9, 1953.

The subsequent two-way visits of the US and Pakistani officials and prolonged parleys between them culminated in the signing of the US-Pakistan Mutual Aid and Security Agreement in May 1954, the flow of dollars and sophisticated weapons has since continued to Pakistan without respite.

The Chinese assessment of Pakistan, on the other hand, did not differ much from the Americans'. Peking in its unimitable style, keeping up the barrage of heavy attacks against the Paper Tiger and consistently stepping up its generous effusion of invectives against the Soviet Union and other Communist countries for having "betrayed" revolutionary struggle and gone revisionist, and went on fondling Islamabad's bellicose hordes. While it did not hesitate to denounce the Soviet Union in most derogatory terms for attempting a dialogue with the Americans and giving economic help to India, Peking maintained a sort of unwritten understanding with Washington o corner the Soviet Union and pressurise India.

China's assessment of Pakistan's strategic importance in global power politics was very close to those of the American and the British. The Peking ideologues headed by Mao Tse-tung knew too well the future role Pakistan could play, being the largest Muslim country in Asia and to pounce upon India whenever necessary. It was not unknown to the Chinese leaders that an influential section of the Pakistani leaders, who were very close to the British colonial régime, characterised the Chinese revolution as essentially nationalist in spirit. It might not have been totally accidental that during this time the Maoist section of the Chinese leadership was pronouncedly narrow nationalist in its projection of China before the world. The Maoist leadership was also not unaware of the comments of the First Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Sir Mohammed Zafrulla Khan in the days of the Korean upheaval that "Mao was not a satellite of Russia."³

It is also a fact that since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Pakistani rulers, with calculated long-term objectives took a *dubious attitude towards* the Soviet Union. They regarded Soviet Power as a serious threat to Pakistan's

³*The Hindu*, Madras, January 18, 1951, referred to by B. N. Goswami in *Pakistan and China*, Allied Publishers, 1971.

security and considered Mao's China as a friendly nation. The Chinese leaders were fully informed about the stand taken by Pakistan at the Commonwealth Relations Conference in Toronto in 1949. Sir Zafrulla, who was in China as the first diplomatic representative of British India during the Second World War, endorsed the view in this conference taken by some countries (not India), that the Soviet Union was a potential enemy of Pakistan and greater and real threat to her security would come from the USSR and not from China.⁴ —

The Chinese leaders were aware of the fact that the Pakistani assessment of China and the Soviet Union was immensely influenced by British understanding. During the early years of the Chinese revolution, British policy-makers considered that the Chinese Communists were mostly peasants and their past activities had been guided by the spirit of nationalism. As early as 1949-50, the Britishers anticipated Sino-Soviet rupture (this assessment is available in the House of Commons Debates and writings of several British experts on foreign affairs). It may not be a mere coincidence that the American assessment of China had striking similarity with that of the British. Mao's close friend, Anna Louise Strong, and the veteran American journalist, Edgar Snow, were erudite experts on Mao's doctrines. These specialists had persistently tried to portray a completely different picture of the Chinese revolution and the Communists there. The implication was that the whole Chinese lot differed in their outlook on Communism with the Russians, who happened to be the first in the world to proclaim scientific socialism. One of the astute British experts in colonial matters, Sir Robert Scot, put across the thesis in the American quarterly, *Foreign Affairs* (January 1971) that between America and China, "there is no permanent conflict of national interests such as exists between China and Russia." Edgar Snow, in his celebrated book *Red Star Over China*, adroitly invested Mao's brand of Communism with respectability, calling it agrarian reformism in contrast with the "rigid Bolshevism" of the Soviet Union.

With this queer similarity of understanding between America, Britain and China, the Peking leaders' oft-repeated

⁴B. N. Goswami, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

comments about Pakistan that "there was no real conflict of interest between the two countries" (China and Pakistan) did not seem surprising. Making this remark, Premier Chou En-lai conveyed his Government's assurance to the Government of Pakistan during his last visit to Pakistan that "although Pakistan was a party to a military treaty (SEATO), Pakistan was not against China."⁵

It was due to this consideration that China heartily welcomed *de jure* recognition by Pakistan on January 4, 1951, on the advice of the British Government. Britain's influence on Pakistan's decision to recognise China was disclosed by no less a person than the late Mian Ifikharuddin in the Pakistan Assembly on March 23, 1950.

Pakistan's official spokesmen, by their categorical assertion that recognition of China "did not mean any sympathy for any ideology," wanted to discourage the jubilation of the pro-Communist Mian Ifikharuddin. It was also intended to serve as an assurance to the feudal landlords and bureaucrats in Pakistan and their patrons in Britain and America, that the country still remained loyal to them.

For Peking, recognition by a country like Pakistan which was the second Commonwealth country after India and the first Muslim country in Asia, was viewed as a significant step towards its long-term objectives of expanding influence in West Asia and South-East Asia. Overlooking completely the reactionary character of the Pakistani ruling hierarchy, the Chinese leaders appeared to attach more importance to Pakistan's role as a powerful leverage in a contingency like Sino-Soviet cleavage and as a bridgehead for contacts with the Americans and British. The Chinese were aware of the American assessment of the importance of Pakistan and they were obviously taking active interest in it in order to avoid a clash between the Chinese and American strategies in this region. An unwritten understanding thus took shape among Peking, Pindi and Washington. Subsequent developments provided the necessary evidence of the existence of such an agreement. The recent developments over Bangladesh go to prove that this

⁵Mohammed Khalid, *Welfare State, A Case Study of Pakistan*, Royal Book Co., Karachi, 1968, p. 192.

agreement has already been put into action.

The invitation of Premier Chou En-lai to President Nixon with this background is not bewildering even after China has already served some 500 odd warnings to the USA so far. Both understand fully their common interests in South-East Asia and the Indian subcontinent. The forthcoming meeting is presumably for a stock-taking and chalking out of plans to be pursued further, keeping each other's interests in view. However, it is also necessary to keep in mind here that the identity of the views of the USA and China in Pakistan does not necessarily mean total abnegation on the part of one for the benefit of the other. What they are doing is evolving a method of accommodating without stepping on each other's toes.

It may not be incorrect to observe that due to Pakistan's close association with China and the Peking leaders' unflinching support to Yahya Khan who justified his pogrom in Bangladesh on the plea of maintaining the integrity of Pakistan in the name of Islam, Washington felt understandably concerned and rushed arms to Pindi so that America's pound of flesh was not devoured by Peking. Nixon justified his arms supply on the plea that America did not want to lose its political initiative for what he called "a speedy settlement."

It was rightly observed by an Indian commentator that in the case of Bangladesh "... strange unity of purpose was discernible in the attitude of the United States and China, both of which seemed more concerned about the vulnerability of the Pakistani leadership than about the democratic ideals and revolutionary struggle of the Bengalis."

Bangladesh is of special significance in this particular context as there are many of Mao's followers who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Mukti Bahini (liberation force) against the Pakistani army which had been blessed as much by Chairman Mao as President Nixon. It may not be a mere day-dream to hope that Mao's ardent followers would soon realise through their own arduous and death-defying struggle, the abominable role played by China in regard to Bangladesh massacre. It would, therefore, be interesting to study the pros

and cons of China's support to Yahya Khan, taking into account the whole gamut of Sino-Pak relations.

China has actually helped to add one more black chapter to the history of human atrocities by aiding and abetting West Pakistan's dastardly actions in Bangladesh. It is the logical outcome of the subtle Sino-Pak flirtation which has been going on for over two decades. Passion for forging such a bond had in the past overpowered all sense of commitment to basic socialist principles and respect for even ordinary human values. The entire world has been struck with surprise by the Chinese action vis-a-vis the happenings in Bangladesh.

Speaking at an all-India Convention of Teachers and Students on Bangladesh in Calcutta, the most popular student leader of East Bengal, Begum Motia Chowdhury (acclaimed as *Agni Kanya*, the daughter of fire) said on September 14, 1971, that the people through their death-defying struggle for liberation and its experience had perfectly recognised their friends and foes. "We have realised," she said, "that the Soviet Union along with all democratic forces of the world are our real friends." Our struggle is inseparable from the wars of liberation in Vietnam, Angola and Mozambique. We have noticed with pain the role of China, the claimant to socialism. We hope China will change its policy. If it does not, then the names of Yahya and Mao Tse-tung will be written in the same line in the history of liberation struggle of Bangladesh."

There is no indication to suggest that China would change its stand in the immediate future.

People all over the world are bewildered and profoundly shocked by the Chinese support to a military regime which has committed atrocities that have very few parallels in world history. China's so-called revolutionary principles stooped so low as to unhesitatingly accept the role of an active partner of Yahya regime in the genocide in Bangladesh. Its rabid anti-Soviet and anti-Indian policies have driven it to a blind alley from which it can escape only by branding them as "reactionaries." China accused the Soviet Union of playing into "Indian hands and becoming a partner of American imperialism," and this when China is clasping the blood-dripping hands of the

murderer of the Indo-Chinese.

The Soviet Union has been branded by China as an "enemy" of the Pakistani people because it urged upon the Yahya regime to take urgent measures in order to stop "the bloodshed and repression against the population of East Pakistan and for turning to method of a peaceful political settlement."

Even when some of the known pro-Pakistan countries like Britain, West Germany and Japan are hesitant to openly support the despicable Yahya regime, the Chinese leaders have thought it wise to offer active help to Pakistan in the name of maintaining the so-called integrity of Pakistan. China, in order to justify its action, has taken the same view about the war of liberation in Bangladesh as that of the West Pakistani marauders, it appears from Chou En-lai's letter that China is more concerned about the integrity of Pakistan than the Pakistani butchery in Bangladesh and holds the opinion that "the unification of Pakistan and the unity of the people of East and West Pakistan are basic guarantees for Pakistan to attain prosperity and strength."

None would believe that the Chinese leaders are unaware of the plight of the Bengalis in Bangladesh to which the West Pakistani exploiters have driven them during the last 24 years. The Chinese leaders have full knowledge of the background which compelled the Bengalis to rise in revolt. But it is the political motive of China that overlooked the just cause of the Bengali people.

China has found it suitable to describe the popular leaders of Bangladesh as "saboteurs" who, it says, want to "sabotage the unification of Pakistan." It would serve no purpose to draw the Chinese leaders' attention to Badshah Khan's statement on April 22, 1971, which categorically describes the Bengalis as true Muslims and the most ardent followers of the Muslim League in Pakistan. Even Z.A. Bhutto, the President of Pakistan in his broadcast on December 19, 1971, said that Bengalis in East Bengal are true Muslims. It was in East Bengal alone that there was a Muslim Ministry after the creation of Pakistan. The Muslim League rulers dug their own graves in East Bengal by their misdeeds and they should be held responsible for all the lapses which have culminated in the present struggle of the Bengali people for complete liberation. These are, of course, facts, the acceptance of which

would make it difficult for China to continue its actions.

Without caring for truth, China has decided to provide all possible material and moral help to Pakistan. This, no doubt, is quite in conformity with China's earlier policies in regard to Pakistan. Peking has perhaps in mind Lin Piao's ridiculous observation that "revolutionary people never take a gloomy view of the war."⁸ The so-called revolutionaries, therefore, paint a "radical" picture of the genocide in Bangladesh.

The present situation has been most suitable for China to step up its military and economic aid to prove its solidarity and friendship with the West Pakistani hawks and strengthen its foothold in the subcontinent. Radio Pakistan, quoting the Associated Press of Pakistan, said on May 15 that China has offered an interest-free loan of Rs. 100 crores for its economic development.

The Chinese leaders are indeed serious in their business and are not satisfied with merely giving the moral support. They sincerely wanted the West Pakistani butchers to accomplish their sadistic slaughter campaign in East Bengal. Armed support was, therefore, necessary not only to match the American shipment of arms but also to fulfil their pledge to support Yahya Khan in the extermination of the Bengalis. Karachi's semi-official daily, *Pakistan Times*, reported that the Chinese Government handed over to Pakistan Government, on August 12, three 1000-ton freighters. The three vessels, equipped with Japanese radar, were purchased by Pakistan Government at rockbottom prices on interest-free credits. The vessels worth about one million dollars were secured for use, for different purposes, in East Bengal where roads and railway communications had been disrupted by guerilla actions. The ruling clique in Pakistan would indeed remain indebted to the Chinese for this vital help that was very essential to crush the liberation movement in Bangladesh.

China's assessments of the Bangladesh developments and the patriotic freedom fighters has not undergone any change during the climactic developments of the liberation struggle. Peking, therefore, shows no hesitation in extending military,

⁸*People's Daily*, September 12, 1963.

economic and political support to General Yahya Khan. Peking's argument that the Awami League which spearheads the movement for independence in East Bengal is an organisation of the local feudal landlords and capitalists and, therefore, does not qualify for Chinese support is more amusing than convincing. By now it is clear that it is not the Awami League alone which is in the forefront of the liberation struggle but millions of young Bengalis who laid down their lives fighting against the tyrannical forces of Yahya Khan. They were clear and unanimous in their objective of freeing their homeland from Yahya's hordes and heroically marched from victory to victory. The yardstick for the Chinese assessment of the situation should have been the people's verdict which unanimously condemned the Yahya Khan regime. To say that the Awami League in East Bengal is a bigger agent of imperialism than Yahya Khan, and that the Awami League is a bigger instrument of tyranny and exploitation of the masses than the demoniac military clique in West Pakistan is to talk theoretical nonsense as Peking is doing. Phrase-mongering and mouthing of pseudo-revolutionary slogans cannot cover up the Chinese betrayal of the national liberation struggle in Bangladesh.

In this context, the pronouncements made by the Jamaat-e-Islami zealots shed some light on the forces that rejoice at the Chinese support. China may be really embarrassed by the plaudits of the arch enemies of Communism in Pakistan. The religious fanatics are full of praise of Peking for its "forthright stand against Hindu conspiracy." It is indeed ironical that Mao Tse-tung has been certified by the Jamaat paper, *Zindagi*, as the only "true leader of the oppressed people of the world."

Does it not sound ridiculous when Peking and Pindi express identical views about the oppressors and oppressed in Pakistan? It is amazing that the 75 million people of Bangladesh who have been ruthlessly plundered and exploited for the last 24 years are accused of "conspiring the disintegration of Pakistan" and the West Pakistani Military bureaucratic compradore clique is regarded by China as the oppressed. It does not occur to the Chinese leaders to think deeply why the Bengalis who constituted 56 per cent of the population have been compelled to rise in revolt. It is the ideological political degenera-

tion that has robbed China of her conscience and forced it to take a distorted view of the struggle in Bangladesh.

China's alliance with Rawalpindi does not permit it to express concern over the slaughter of the thousands of innocent men, women and children in Bangladesh. This is, however, not for the first time that Peking has exhibited its moral degeneration. People still recall with horror the dark days of 1962 and 1965 when China and Pakistan respectively made war on the people of India. Unbridled opportunism always forced China to indulge in malicious invectives against Soviet Union and India. This hatred also prompted it to forge opportunistic alliances with anti-people, military-bureaucratic regimes like that in Pakistan. In such a policy, China has always been guided by its narrow, sectarian outlook. This policy could as well be the outcome of China's strict adherence to the puerile doctrine as propounded once by Marshal Chen Yi that "the Chinese friendship for Pakistan stemmed from the elementary principle that one should be friendly with the enemies of one's enemies."⁹

⁹Ministry of External Affairs Report, 1966-67, New Delhi, p. 15.

CHAPTER TWO

Not a Fortuitous Convergence

THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP that developed between Pakistan and China since the latter's emergence as a People's Republic has remained an enigma, not only due to their diametrically opposite ideologies but also because of their tacit understanding with the Western Powers, especially the USA.

Pakistan's coming into being as a separate state in the Indian subcontinent, accompanied by certain peculiarities was something unnatural. The two wings of Pakistan, separated by nearly 1,200 miles of Indian territory, created a problem about the security of the new-born state. Its immediate neighbour India, with which it had many things in common and together with whose people the Pakistanis had won independence, was projected as its bitterest and eternal enemy. The fear psychosis was deliberately instilled in the common Pakistani mind by the country's ruling clique. The concern for the sanctity of Islam came in handy for the rulers. But religion which played the principal role in the creation of Pakistan became not only a stumbling block in the way of the common people's progress and prosperity, but also created problems for the ruling clique which had to serve their US and British imperialist masters and also to preserve the sanctity of religion.

With these inherent difficulties, Pakistan's friendship with communist China naturally gave rise to suspicion. While the founders of Pakistan, including Mohammed Ali Jinnah, failed

to define clearly the role of religion in the new state, they had also failed to visualise the influence of religion in Pakistan's foreign policy.

In the repeated and unsuccessful attempt of Pakistani rulers to frame a constitution, the problem of finding a suitable place for Islam remained unresolved. The religion which was conceived as the guiding force in managing the affairs of state in Pakistan created some new problems which could not be visualised earlier. It is no wonder that even after 24 years of its creation, Pakistan failed to reach a consensus for defining clearly the place and role of Islam. This difference happens to be one of the main reasons for the country's failure to have a civilian and democratic administration and a constitution.

These problems, reflecting the artificial or unnatural characters of the new state, became the constant worry of the leaders including Mohammed Ali Jinnah. They had very little time to devote to foreign policy matters. The British and US monopolists, who wielded considerable influence over a large section of the Muslim League leadership and the country's economy, used these problems to their advantage. Though initially Pakistan wanted to pursue a non-aligned foreign policy, men like Jinnah always stressed that Pakistan must remain loyal to the Commonwealth led by Britain. The rulers of Pakistan at the early stages, therefore, greatly valued British views on international issues. The emergence of People's China and the question of its recognition prompted the Pakistan rulers to seek the British views. Besides, because of Pakistan's own handicap of inadequate information about the new Government in China, the Muslim League leaders were not fully acquainted with the US attitude towards the new authority in Peking. The assessment available with Sir Mohammed Zafrulla Khan, as mentioned earlier, was also heavily British oriented for obvious reasons. The Pakistani rulers were thus compelled to agree with the British analysis not only to demonstrate its loyalty but also to keep the future options open in case China turned hostile towards it. Pakistan, like the British, viewed the Chinese revolution in 1949, even though engineered by the Communists, as a successful nationalist struggle to overthrow foreign yoke than merely a manifestation

of the world-wide Communist design.¹

Having assessed the Chinese revolution as strongly nationalist instead of violently Communist, Pakistani policy-makers started selling the idea that in the interest of Pakistan's national security it should have good relations with the nationalist China despite the opposite ideologies subscribed to by the two States. Pakistan's headache was somehow to win dependable friends in its fight against India. China was credited with the potentiality of emerging as a powerful leader of the Asian world to challenge India's rightful position not only in Asia but also on the international stage. It was also taken into account by Pakistan that in the event of Britain's eclipse as a world power, Pakistan's relations with China would give it a tremendous bargaining power with the USA. As we shall see later, China's calculations in welcoming Pakistani overtures were more or less based on similar reasoning. China's immediate objective was to win Pakistani support in order to wear out the US opposition and enter the United Nations more easily.

Pakistan's preference of Peking to Moscow was also due to the well-known reasons of Soviet Union's strict adherence to ideological principles in the evaluation of Pakistan. Despite Soviet Union's generous gift of foodgrains in 1950, when there was a severe food shortage in Pakistan, Moscow incurred its displeasure due to the former's critical comments about the Muslim League. A leading Soviet Indologist, Dyakov, described in 1948 the principle of "divide and rule" as the cornerstone of British policy in India (referring indirectly to Pakistan's creation) and called the Muslim League a tool of the British since its inception. Accusing the Muslim leaders of demagoguery, Dyakov observed that through this they managed to attract fairly wide masses of the Muslim democratic intelligentsia and the Muslim peasantry.² The same author later called Pakistan an "artificial state" and commented that the "sole link" between its two parts was "a common religion." Interestingly, some of the leading Pakistani public

¹Mushtaq Ahmed, "Pakistan's Policy in South-East Asia," *Pakistan Horizon*, June 4, 1951.

²Quoted by D. Kaushik, *Soviet Relations with India and Pakistan*, Vikas Publications, 1971.

figures demanding autonomy for different provinces in Pakistan made identical remarks in support of their cases.

Pakistan was irked by the Soviet dislike of its pan-Islamism and condemnation of its convening the first Islamic Economic Conference in Karachi in 1949. Moscow, too, was disturbed by a reported secret agreement between Pakistan and Britain for military bases in West Pakistan. There was speculation in Soviet circles that the USA was also pressurising Pakistan to accord facilities for the installation of military bases in North-West Frontier and elsewhere.³ Later events, particularly the U-2 incident, proved that the Soviet apprehensions were well founded. Soviet Union made no secret of its displeasure at Pakistan's hobnobbing with the British and American imperialists to harm the neighbouring states.

"At the end of 1949, four Senators accompanied by all manners of experts spent nearly a week in Pakistan. They went to Khyber Pass, studied the country around, made photographs of the locality. These activities indicated that the American and British imperialists were interested in Pakistan not only as a market and field of investment. They are out to make it one of their military bases."⁴

In regard to Korean war also, Pakistan's stand came in for sharp criticism from Moscow and concern was expressed in the Soviet Union about Pakistan moving closer to Washington to bag the US support on Kashmir issue. On June 19, 1952, *Pravda* quoted the Italian newspaper *Avanti* to point out that if the Government of Pakistan became more amenable to collaboration with Washington, the USA was not only ready to offer Karachi economic and military assistance but its active support in the Kashmir dispute. Pakistan was obsessed with the Kashmir problem and it aligned with all those who promised to support its stand on Kashmir directly or indirectly, while discarding association with all those who were not prepared to give any indication of such support. These factors tilted the balance heavily in favour of Pakistan's decision to flirt with those who were against the Soviet Union. Though China appeared friendly with Moscow for several reasons and

³*Trud*, November 21, 1949.

⁴*New Times*, May 24, 1950, quoted by D. Kaushik in his book, *Soviet Relations with India and Pakistan*.

was ambiguous about Pakistan's claim to Kashmir, Pakistani rulers decided to cast their lot with Peking. They quietly swallowed even derogatory Chinese remarks about Jinnah, keeping in view their own short-term and long-term objectives. (Some Chinese leaders commented once that "the Nehrus and Jinnahs are feeble-minded bourgeoisie" and they "were stooges of British imperialism," *China Digest*, April 5, 1949). Pakistan was perhaps less angry because Nehru, too, was maligned along with Jinnah.

Some Pakistani experts also held that Pakistan always had British sympathy due to Jinnah's annoyance with General Chiang Kai-shek for his advice to the British for transfer of power as early as 1942, during his visit to India. This, according to a Pakistani author, was clearly not an appreciation of the Muslim demand for a separate state. This advice was "preposterous" as the British withdrawal from the sub-continent at that time would have left the entire Muslim minority at the mercy of the Hindu-led Congress and sparked off a civil war.⁵ The advice of Chiang Kai-shek provoked critical remarks from Jinnah who said that the General totally lacked understanding of communal problems then existing in India. This also was the reason, according to the same author, why Pakistan did not shed tears over Chiang Kai-shek's ouster in 1949.

Giving his views on Pakistan's coming closer to China, the Pakistani expert observed: "India's militancy, especially simmering conflict in Kashmir and passive hostility of the Afghan Government were weighty points to consider and Pakistan certainly did not want another great neighbour (China) to be its enemy. Enlightened self-interest was obviously the principal motivation for Pakistan's decision to establish diplomatic relations with the Government of Peking."⁶

Pakistan thus put forward its argument for friendship with China to safeguard her national interest and security. But it was not a strong ground. In case of Soviet offer of help and move for friendship, Pakistan adopted a totally indifferent attitude on the plea that the Soviet Union was not so advanced as to

⁵Qutubuddin Ahmed, *Foreign Policy of Pakistan, An Analysis*, Allied Book Corporation, Karachi, 1964, pp. 74-96.

⁶*Ibid.*

be able to provide it with capital machinery and technical skill, urgently needed for the development of the country's industries. This branding would have been more appropriate in the case of China which was far more backward than the USSR. Chinese economy till the mid-fifties was heavily dependent upon the Soviet Union. The expectation of the Pakistani leaders, therefore, of any substantial economic help from China was influenced by certain other considerations and compulsions. This is also supported by the fact that although Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan received an invitation from the Soviet Union to visit Moscow in 1949, he wangled an invitation and decided to go to Washington instead. Some Pakistani commentators believed that the invitation from Washington was "a consequence of the invitation that he received from Russia."⁷ These factors go to support the view that while Pakistan was not prevented from having friendship with China, any move for understanding with the Soviet Union was immediately spiked by the USA and Britain.

Pakistan, in its early years, visualised the "inevitability" of a clash between the Soviet Union and the Western imperialist powers and "it would be a supreme Russian interest to disrupt air communication from West to East and vice versa, as well as to interfere with the shipping of Western Powers in the Indian Ocean. The Russians could do it best by controlling Karachi."⁸ While this assessment, by all considerations, had pronounced Western overtones, if not entirely US or British instigated, Pakistan was also concerned about possible Soviet moves towards the oil regions of West Asia with Karachi as a base of operation. Pakistan, therefore, not so much in its own as in the interests of the USA and Britain, decided to shun Soviet friendship.

Considering China to be less dangerous than communist Russia, Pakistan gradually moved towards forging a viable relationship with Peking. Pakistani strategists feared that "non-communist" countries which had pacts or alliances with the Soviet Union had to ultimately change their political and economic systems and adopt communism, and that had to make

⁷K. Sarwar Hasan, *The Strategic Interests of Pakistan*, Pakistan Institution of International Affairs, Karachi, 1954.

⁸*Ibid.*

themselves wholly and completely subservient to the Russians in matters of foreign policy. This fear-complex came in handy for the Pakistani ruling class to make the country an appendage of the USA. Pakistan felt assured that China would not be influenced by Soviet Union as a leading member of the international communist community to spread communism in Pakistan. As stated earlier, China was later considered by President Ayub Khan as a vast country which could not be made a "satellite of Russia," while Zulfikar Ali Bhutto considered China as a colossus which would follow an independent policy. A Pakistani scholar also expressed the opinion that the significance of the Chinese revolution lay in its indigenous character and its substantial difference from the Russian variety of communism.⁹

Concerted efforts were thus made by Pakistan to prepare the ground to sufficiently cover up the Islamic prejudices and to facilitate the establishment of the envisaged relationship with communist China. For Pakistan it now became imperative to accord recognition to China. But this new relationship had its inevitable consequences. In Pakistan's case external pulls and pressures played a more dominant role than its strong religious feelings and narrow national interests.

Pakistan, still under tremendous British influence, could not brush aside the latter's advice on the issue. Pakistan held repeated consultations with Britain and Canada in the matter of its according recognition to China. The proceedings of the House of Commons give the idea that discussions took place between the Pakistani Foreign Minister and Philip Noel Baker, the British Commonwealth Relations Secretary, to arrive at a consensus and evolve a common policy towards China. The final decision was taken by Karachi on January 4, 1951, to accord *de jure* recognition to China. The description of the new state as "the Central Peoples' Government of the People's Republic of China established at Peking" in the Karachi press communique smacked too much British. It also suggested that Pakistan had reservations in accepting the new government as the only legal ruling authority. Taiwan's position was not

⁹Mushtaq Ahmed, "Pakistan's Policy in South-East Asia," *Pakistan Horizon*, June 4, 1961

made clear due to American and British pressures.

While it was the second country after India in the Commonwealth to recognise China, the progressive and democratic sections in Pakistan felt happy over it. But the ruling clique in Pakistan soon dispelled their hopes by declaring that the recognition of Peking did in no way imply the acceptance of its ideology.¹⁰ The democratic forces in Pakistan supported the government's action but they took exception to British pressures or advice on this issue.

Pakistani experts also mentioned that in essence the fear of India dominated Pakistan's foreign policy. This view was endorsed by almost all policy-makers of Pakistan. In justification of their friendship with China they had repeatedly emphasised that although Chinese variety of communism was different from that existing in Russia, Pakistan did not even welcome the Chinese type for its developments. To the Pakistani policy-makers, the threat of the Chinese communism, compared to the immediate and the continuing danger from India, were remote threats.¹¹

Pakistan, inspired by the USA and Britain, was made to see "real danger" in India and Russia both of which had already developed relations of friendship. The US and the British strategists calculated that it would be more rewarding to bolster up Pakistan than make futile effort to cajole India to snipe at the Russians. The oft-repeated concern of the danger of communism in Asia was, from this point of view, directed more towards the Soviet Union than Peking. The Chinese leaders, on their part, thought it wiser to have good relations with Karachi than with New Delhi where Soviet reputation was already high. Moreover, Peking at that stage did not relish the idea of a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union for several reasons. Though Peking envied the growing Soviet goodwill in India, its own limitation hampered its activities in India. Good relations with Pakistan were, therefore, considered in Peking as a blessing in disguise. Through Pakistan, China could exert pressure on India as well as keep the door open for negotiations with the USA and Britain to divide

¹⁰Pakistan Constituent Assembly Debates, March 25, 1950.

¹¹K. Sarwar Hasan, *Strategic Interests of Pakistan*.

amicably the spheres of influence in Asia and West Asia.

For Pakistan the new relationship turned out to be a passion. It had little use for measures for social and economic advancement. A section of the Pakistani authorities gave the impression that the country's foreign trade, which was severely hit by the Indian devaluation in 1950, had the possibility of making up with China's help. But this was not wholly correct. To understand the point it would be useful to have a look at the economic situation prevailing in Pakistan.

Pakistan refused to devalue the rupee at the instigation of the US monopolists who wanted to ensure Pakistan's total economic dependence on them. When India, after devaluation of its rupee, drastically reduced the import of cotton and jute from Pakistan, the Western countries were in better position than China to make use of Pakistan's economic plight. Although the US and British monopolists were more influential in Pakistan and both were working for the same purpose, certain quarters in the USA also assessed the military potential of Pakistan from its global strategy as a spring-board against the USSR. They tried their utmost to dislodge the British from its pre-eminent position in Pakistan, in order to establish their own sway.¹²

The US and British imperialists used their influence on the leadership of ruling Muslim League to penetrate into Pakistan by offering generous economic aid. The foreign monopolists also encouraged the pan-Islamic feelings nurtured by the ruling section of the Muslim League, dreaming to play a leading role in the Muslim world and win their sympathy to settle the Kashmir issue in Pakistan's favour. This attitude helped the US monopolists not only to lure Pakistan into joining the US-backed military blocs to get arms and economic help, but also to secure Pakistan as a bridgehead to counter the Soviet influence in Asia.

In the struggle for a foothold in Pakistan, the USA succeeded in elbowing out their British partners. A group of American geologists soon arrived in Pakistan to explore its mineral resources in the beginning of 1948. The US monopoly capitalists

¹²Gankovsky and L. R. Gordon-Polonskaya, *A History of Pakistan*, Nauka Publishing House, Moscow 1964, p. 167.

working in close cooperation with the ruling Muslim League hierarchy, agreed to invest more capital in Pakistan. The move was officially favoured by the Pakistan Government. Addressing a meeting of the Pakistani Council of Industries on September 8, 1949, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan called upon foreign businessmen to invest capital in Pakistan. This call was followed up by a visit of a mission of the American industrial experts and a group of US Senators in the autumn of 1949. A team on behalf of the US dominated World Bank (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) also came to Karachi in February 1950. Pakistan sought a loan of Rs 750 million in 1950 from the IBRD.

The most important advance, however, was made by the USA during Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan's visit at the invitation of President Truman. The trip resulted in the signing of a US-Pakistan agreement for the purchase of US arms. With this the avowed neutral foreign policy of Pakistan was abandoned to become an important military satellite of the USA.

As against these attempts, the Soviet Union, too, made overtures to Pakistan to rescue it from its economic rut. The Soviet Union, immediately after the establishment of diplomatic relations with Pakistan, supplied 120,000 tons of foodgrains. In 1948-49, the trade turnover between the two countries was more than Rs 71 million with a balance of Rs 17.2 millions in favour of Pakistan. There was abundant scope for improving the trade relations in Pakistan's favour. Commenting on this aspect, Pakistani economist, Sajjad Hussain wrote in 1950: "There are great possibilities of developing economic relations because Russia is prepared to supply Pakistan its essential needs and Pakistan is prepared to supply Russia its surplus raw materials."¹³

Soviet Union also came forward with offers for oil and coal exploration. The offers were indeed significant from the Soviet point of view. Two British enterprises, the Burnah Oil Company and the Attock Oil Company, at that time owned most of the oil industry in Pakistan. British private capital held monopoly control over coal and other vital industries. Foreign

¹³Sajjad Hussain, *Pakistan Economics*, Karachi, 1950.

monopoly capital investments in Pakistan were estimated at Rs 1000 million in 1950.¹⁴ The Soviet assistance in these fields was, therefore, aimed at ending the British and US monopoly control in Pakistan. But the Pakistan ruling class, loyal to Britain and the USA, had unceremoniously rejected the Soviet offers. They laid down certain preconditions for accepting the Russian assistance. Pakistan wanted the Soviet aid to be channelled through the United Nations agencies. It demanded a guarantee that the Russian technicians would not use their presence in Pakistan for propaganda purposes and that they would have to work under Pakistani Government officials.¹⁵

It may be noted that Pakistan, despite her huge adverse balance of trade with the USA, UK, and Japan in 1952, did not make any serious effort to improve its trade relations with Russia. According to a *Pakistan Times* report of December, 17, 1952, adverse balance of trade with the USA, UK and Japan was Rs 22.75 crores, Rs 51.23 crores and Rs 24.63 crores, respectively.

From all these, it becomes quite clear that although the Soviet offers for technical and economic assistance were in the national interest of Pakistan, the latter could not avail of it due to the US and British manoeuvres. Pakistan's rejection of Soviet help was politically motivated and the pro-West section of the ruling Muslim League was responsible for leading the country into the Western parlour. These facts bear proof that Pakistan established friendly relations with China due to the US and British insistence. For, China did not have then the capacity to render any assistance to Pakistan's economy. For arms, too, Pakistan had to beg at the doors of Western countries. It was much later that China gave military and economic assistance to Pakistan. It would also not be correct to assume that China was not aware of the alignment of ruling forces in Pakistan and their links vis-a-vis USA and Britain at the early stage when its decision to recognise Peking was taken.

Whatever might have been the Chinese knowledge or motivations, there is no denial of the fact that the Sino-Pakistan

¹⁴Y. V. Gankovsky, L. R. Gordon-Polonskaya, *Op Cit.*

¹⁵Arif Hussain, *Pakistan, Its Ideology and Foreign Policy*, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, London, 1966, pp. 89-113.

relationship started not merely on the basis of national security or interests of the two countries. For even before the ink was dry on the statement announcing the recognition, Pakistan was seen begging for military equipment and economic aid from Britain and America. Pakistan's differences with India and Afghanistan were also exaggerated and played up to create scare among its people to accept more US military aid and ruin Pakistan's economy. Thus, from the point of view of Pakistan's national economy and security, China's utility was limited at the initial stages. China, however, assessed the immense importance of Pakistan to meet both its short-term and long-term objectives.

After recognition of China, Pakistan appointed Major-General N.A.M. Raza of the Pakistan Defence Services as the country's first ambassador to Peking. This was done apparently to create an impression in Pakistan that a man from the armed forces would be best able to extract arms commitment from China. Though he was appointed on July 19, 1951, he presented his credentials in Peking only on November 12, 1951. The next issue for Pakistan to consider was the support to the draft resolution moved by India seeking China's entry into the United Nations in 1950. Pakistan, after a lot of haggling at the US counter, decided to support the Indian resolution which, however, failed to get through. Pakistan immediately after its pact with the USA in February 1951 changed its stand on the issue of China's representation in the UN and maintained this stand till 1960. It is obvious that Pakistan did so on the advice of the USA which wanted certain commitments from Pakistan as well as from China.

China's intervention in Korea in 1950 also complicated matters for Pakistan. Peking's involvement in Tibet and Formosa created a rift between the USA and China. Pakistan's predicament in this tangle was understandable. Though Pakistan publicly adopted an unfriendly posture towards the Chinese action in Tibet, it did not support the appeal of the Tibetans to the U.N. Again, in the case of Formosa, Pakistan's stand was deliberately ambiguous, so as not to annoy the Chinese or to displease the US.

It should, however, be noted that in regard to the Korean War, Pakistan wished to play the role of a peace-maker along

with others. This roused interest in many Asian countries as Pakistan at that time was not regarded to be powerful and reputed to be able to play any effective role in such a difficult international issue. Pakistan wanted to give the impression that it still remained a neutral country and could be expected to take a neutral position on international issues. This was also intended to provide an opportunity to Pakistan to find a place for itself in Asia and West Asia where its prestige was not very high.

But here, too, Pakistan acted according to the US and Chinese wishes. Both the USA and China did not want a complete break in their relations on this issue. They kept their respective actions limited to a certain point with each other's national interest in view. For, according to Edgar Snow, it was Stalin who unleashed the Korean War to create permanent enmity between America and China. This assertion was never refuted by either China or the USA. It, therefore, follows that Pakistan had an inkling of the US and Chinese intentions in Korea and decided to try for a compromise. During the war, Pakistan did not oppose the US action in Korea to please America, but spoke against the US move to use atom bomb in order to assure Peking that it meant well. When the issue was raised at the UN, Pakistan, in order not to displease either, abstained from voting the US-sponsored resolution branding China as an aggressor. A significant development which emerged from the Korean crisis was, that while there was no sharp cleavage in the Pakistan-US-China relations, Soviet Union's relations with all the three took a sharp turn. A Soviet journal described Pakistan's gift of 5,000 tons of rice to the UN for use in South Korea, as Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan's servile zeal.¹⁶ Pakistan, thus, continued to play a double game to maintain its link with both the USA and China.

The ruling military-landlord-industrialist complex now started working hard for a full-fledged military alliance with America. The then Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan army, General Ayub Khan, who was toying with the idea for a long time with the full support of Governor Ghulam Mohammed and

¹⁶*New Times*, July 12, 1950.

Defence Secretary Iskander Mirza, was now joined by Prime Minister Mohammed Ali (Bogra). Mohammed Ali, a known US stooge, was openly advocating a military alliance with America. He stated in a TV interview in Washington that "Pakistan did not want to be neutral and wished to be aligned with likeminded nations that share the same ideals as are cherished by the people of Pakistan." The desire to pursue a common policy with the USA was thus officially proclaimed. Mohammed Ali, who was installed in office by the USA, formulated a bitter anti-Soviet foreign policy with the full blessings of America. In all his policy pronouncements, Mohammed Ali carefully avoided anti-Chinese slant.

Mohammed Ali made a full exposure of himself in 1954 at the Colombo Conference of five Asian Prime Ministers. He clashed with Prime Minister Nehru who was bitter about the Western colonial machinations in Asia. Strongly opposing Nehru's contention, Mohammed Ali played the role of a drummer-boy of the West and argued that the Soviet Union and its ideology were responsible for all the malaise in Asia. He went to the extent of asserting that the "insidious Soviet attempt to bring all other nations under its heel was more dangerous than the Western type of colonialism."¹ While nothing could be more pleasing than this to the Americans, Mohammed Ali significantly avoided any reference to the Chinese communist activities in Asia. This may not be due to a mere oversight.

With Mohammed Ali's assumption of power, it became easy for the USA to accredit Pakistan as a sincere ally of America. After generous economic and military aid, the pro-US section of the ruling party was assigned the task of popularising American aid in Pakistan in order to ensure a smooth ushering in of US-Pakistan entente.

Mohammed Ali and Ayub Khan visited Washington in October 1953. They were joined by Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed in November 1953 and held discussions on American arms supply to Pakistan. *The New York Times* reported on November 2, 1953, that in exchange of arms, the USA sought facilities in Pakistan for the installation of military

¹*The Times*, London, April 30 and May 3, 1954.

bases. Richard Nixon, the then US Vice-President, came to Karachi in December 1953.

To facilitate the US plan for a formal military pact in which Turkey was also to be included, Ghulam Mohammed, General Iskander Mirza and General Ayub Khan visited Ankara at the end of 1953. Meanwhile, the USA unsuccessfully tried to entangle India with this grand alliance by offering military and economic aid. But the move failed due to India's refusal to fall in. The USA, however, went ahead with the Pakistan-Turkey Agreement for Friendly Cooperation, signed in Karachi on April 2, 1954. The agreement, essentially a military alliance against the security of West Asia and Asian countries, came into force on June 12, 1954. Articles 4 and 6 of the Pact stressed the need for consultation and cooperation between the contracting parties in the sphere of defence and manufacture of weapons and other military equipment, and also provided for other countries' inclusion in it.

Protest demonstrations were staged in several Asian and Arab countries against the pact. The Governments of the Soviet Union and other East European countries, as well as those of India, Afghanistan, Burma, Indonesia, Egypt, Nepal and Ceylon in their protest notes pointed out that the agreement was against the national interests of Pakistan and Turkey and it would increase international tension. Significantly, China did not send any official note of protest.

The Pakistan-Turkey agreement preceded the Pakistan-US military alliance signed on May 19, 1954. The agreement providing Pakistan with duty-free supplies of weapons, military equipment and other war material, was followed by the visit of a large group of American military officers led by Major-General V. Saxton. Saxton stayed back in Pakistan and was joined later by Admiral Redford and General Van Fleet. These military specialists immediately started installing military units in Chitral, Gilgit, Peshawar and Rawalpindi and also Quetta in West Pakistan. It should be noted here that these areas were close to the southern borders of the USSR.

Meanwhile, Pakistan took another step ahead and joined the US-sponsored South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) on September 8, 1954. After a fortnight, Pakistan also became a member of the Baghdad Pact on September

split in 1957, mainly owing to the differences over the country's foreign policy, organised several protest meetings in the country. Bhasani's section of the Awami League which came out of the party and formed the National Awami Party, opposed Pakistan's joining the CENTO and SEATO and said in a statement that it believed in strengthening the UN to solve international problems including Pakistan's differences with India, by peaceful means.²¹ The NAP formed at the Kagmari Session on July 25 and 26, 1957, split itself into two in 1966.

The expectations were that the touchstone of the Chinese assessment of Pakistan's membership in the SEATO and CENTO would be such popular reactions. But these proved wrong. Peking gave more credence to the self-righteous assurances of the Pakistani military rulers that these pacts were not directed against China. Chairman Mao Tse-tung sportingly accepted a hearty message of goodwill for China from Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed on the occasion of China's fifth anniversary on October 1, 1954. The Peking leaders also affirmed that the two countries could peacefully coexist.

Opportunism blinded China, and it regarded Pakistan as a better company than India even when *Hindi-Chini-Bhai-Bhai* relationship was at its height. The reason for this double-standard was the calculation that India could pose a serious challenge to China in emerging as the sole claimant to leadership. India's policy of non-alignment had already made a place for her in the world and this naturally was an eyesore to China, the USA, and Pakistan. Soviet Union which lauded India's policy came in for sharp criticism. China's obvious animus to Indo-Soviet cordiality indirectly helped America's subversive designs in Asia. The directly US-aided hostility of Pakistan against India became more sinister. Thus came about the convergence of interests which was in no way fortuitous.

CHAPTER THREE

China's Foreign Policy Objectives

IN HIS BROADCAST on October 12, 1971, General Yahya Khan stated : "We deeply appreciate the friendship and support of China to our just stand" in regard to the East Bengal happenings.

In the same speech, he admired "the understanding shown by the USA" which "is an important contribution to the principle that every nation has the right to find solution to its own problems." He also noted with interest the Soviet Premier Kosygin's keen desire for the maintenance of peace in the subcontinent. But General Yahya Khan was constrained to point out that Mr Kosygin had shown no appreciation of "various positive steps" taken by Pakistan for transfer of power. The President was also shocked at Kosygin's failure to reprimand India, even mildly, for its alleged help to the liberation forces in East Bengal.

General Yahya Khan had thus made abundantly clear whom he considered to be supporters of the military junta's hideous brutalities in Bangladesh, and who was totally opposed to such inhuman activities. The point to note, however, is the fact of China's self-chosen posture to side with the West Pakistani murderers along with the Americans. A cursory survey of Peking's policy postures towards Pakistan during the last two decades will be sufficient to remove any element of surprise in it. Why did Peking befriend the military-bureaucratic regime of Pakistan? China's ideological offensive and subversion in

the Third World with the Quixotic claim of bringing about world revolution led it to offer unflagging support to the Islamabad regime.

Nationalistic and hegemonistic considerations have always guided the Maoist leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) to impose its own views not only upon the opponents of Mao Tse-tung but also on the different Communist parties in the world. In their blinding desire to establish China's supremacy over the world, the Maoists never hesitated to collaborate even with the worst enemies of communism and democracy.

The Chinese "friendship" offensive on the neighbouring countries was undertaken with the object of forcing them to follow or support China. India, its immediate neighbour with anti-colonialist traditions, was looked upon with suspicion as a possible contender for leadership in Asia and Africa. Pakistan, on the other hand, nursing its inborn hostility towards India and having strategic importance was chosen by China as one of its most suitable vehicles to advance its designs in Asia.

The Maoists in fact were trying to foist Mao's thesis on world revolution on the CPC since 1945. At the Seventh Congress of the CPC, the Maoists projected the line that all the work of the party must be guided by the "Thoughts of Mao." The line was openly proclaimed at the Conference of Trade Unions of Asia and Oceania held in Peking in 1949. It was proposed that all the peoples fighting for national liberation were bound to accept the line of Mao Tse-tung. Since then the Maoists have been trying unsuccessfully to assume the leadership of what they described as "world revolution." During mid-fifties, Mao formulated his own idea of the so-called "intermediate zone," dividing the world into three parts. The United States, was placed in the first; the USSR and the People's Democracies in the second. The rest was called the "intermediary zone" led by China. This Maoist concept was first outlined in an interview to the American journalist Anna Louise Strong in August 1946.

It was based on the idea of consolidation of all international anti-American forces, irrespective of their social conditions. They were ultimately to be made subservient to the aims of

Chinese foreign policy. Mao held the view that the socialist camp was not opposed to imperialism as a world system but only to the United States. A vast area, therefore, remained outside the domain of the socialist camp and the USA, and this was Mao's "intermediary zone." The idea was later accepted as a political doctrine with a contemporary version. Asian, African and Latin American countries which had already won independence or were still fighting for independence were included in the "first intermediary zone." Both India and Pakistan prominently figured in this zone where the Maoists wanted to intensify the struggle for establishing their hegemony.

Mao invented the theory that Western imperialists had annexed Vietnam, Burma, Korea, Nepal and Bhutan from the former imperial China, and regaining them was China's prime duty. Mao held the view that these were tributary states of China and were dismembered by the imperialists. It may be pointed out that such expansionist ideas had their origin in the Great Han traditions.

This traditional and nationalistic idea also manifested in the theory that, "China is whatever is populated by the Chinese." No wonder, these ideas were the dominant factors in China's foreign policy and for obvious reasons came into conflict with the Indian and other Asian countries' foreign policies. Mao himself has been the staunchest protagonist of these ideas since the late thirties. It was, therefore, natural for Mao's followers to shape Chinese national and foreign policies accordingly. A reference to the ideological question in a book published in 1945 about Mao Tse-tung, allegedly inspired, advanced the theory that although Marxism-Leninism was the basic ideology in China's frontier region, it was undergoing a change in conformity with the slogans of Mao Tse-tung.

This is what the Maoists then called "Marxist-Leninist nationalism." In essence, however, it was Maoism replacing Marxism-Leninism. All the ideas and slogans of Mao were not fully put into practice at the early stages of the People's China due to several unavoidable factors. China, then, was not in a position to withstand the repercussions of a complete break with the socialist world. Isolation from the socialist camp owing

to ideological differences would have resulted in the collapse of the Chinese regime and it would have again become victim of colonial and imperialist aggression. Mao, therefore, remained quiet until China made significant progress in all sectors of its national economy with the help of the socialist world and particularly the Soviet Union, till 1956.

In the beginning of its relations with Pakistan, Peking was guided by the conviction that although the former's foreign policy was completely subservient to the USA and its national policy was anti-people, good relations might pay rich dividends in future. Chinese leaders were aware that Maoism being different from basic Marxism-Leninism, it would inevitably clash with the ideology of the socialist camp. Pakistan could, therefore, be effectively used to maintain and aggravate cold war atmosphere in the subcontinent to throw the Asian nations into a state of permanent hostility against each other. This would also involve the Soviet Union which had long borders with a number of Asian countries.

It is true that Peking could not have succeeded in this game on its own but for the active cooperation of the USA and Pakistan. Peking, therefore, took great care not to offend Washington and always avoided a direct confrontation. Immediate concern of China was, however, to secure recognition from Pindi and its support for entering the UN.

In view of this immediate objective, Peking preferred to ignore Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan's statement in Washington in 1950 that Pakistan would always side with the USA. The people of Pakistan had, however, the courage, to question Liaquat Ali's statement. Pakistani press criticised the Prime Minister for not demanding an end to the American-aided colonial war in Vietnam and withdrawal of British troops from the Middle East.¹

While this was definitely the voice of the progressive and democratic forces in Pakistan, China chose to turn a deaf ear to it and lent support to the Islamabad regime with its silence. This self-appointed leader of Asia and the world conveniently shut its eyes to the activities of the Pakistan Government in the UN. Peking did not react to the

¹Pakistan Times, July 14, 1950.

Pakistan-sponsored resolution in the UN in October 1950, authorising MacArthur to cross into North Korean territory. Pakistan also fought for its own inclusion as a member on the Commission for Korea in which India refused to be dragged in. Liaquat Ali Khan's statement in London on July 3, 1950, that Pakistan would render all possible help to South Korea, was not considered worth Chinese attention. Reports appearing in world press about the installation of American military bases near the southern borders of Russia caused no concern to China. It was also disclosed officially in Rawalpindi that Pakistani army officers were being trained in the USA.

In 1950, when China was elated by the Pakistani recognition, the *London Times* reported on August 29 that the Pakistani rulers wished to give military support to the UN force in Korea "in spite of the likely apathy or even hostility of many members of the public ..."

China's anxiety to get into the UN with Pakistani support and to establish viable relations with the United States obscured its own ideological commitments. It forgot to condemn Pakistan's military pacts with the most blatant of all imperialist powers. In 1951, when Pakistan had totally mortgaged itself to the Americans, Peking was intriguingly silent. China did not attach much importance to the July 21, 1951 statement of the US Assistant Secretary of State, George C McGhee that the people of Pakistan were strongly oriented towards the West, particularly, the United States.² McGhee asserted that Pakistan had taken active measures to "repress internal communist activity" and in spite of its recognition of China, it is clearly aware of the aggressive aims of communism.³ It implied that the USA was not against Pakistan's recognition of China, and the Chinese-type communism was not to be declared a taboo in Pakistan.

China did not take the Korean War, perhaps, too seriously, due to the danger of a complete break with the USA. Peking did not also mind Pakistan's collaboration with the USA in Korea. Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin declared in an interview on October 22, 1951: "A happy solution of the

²*The Mutual Security Programme, Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of US Representatives.*

³*Ibid.*

Kashmir problem could release our defence forces and put us in a position seriously to consider sending troops to Korea."⁴ While this could be a Pakistani ruse to get the US arms aid to win Kashmir, China's cold reaction to it was unexpected. Peking, perhaps, liked to keep both Pindi and Washington in good humour. While Pakistan continued supporting the USA on Taiwan and recognised the Bao Dai regime in South Vietnam in June 1952, China was already so enamoured of Pakistan that it could not bring itself round to even a mild protest against this apparently anti-China posture.

After Stalin's death in March 1953 and the Korean armistice in July that year, Mao stepped up his efforts to become the undisputable leader of the Asian and African peoples. Sino-Pak relations in 1953 and 1954 bore clear impress of the Maoist designs in Asia and Africa. The year 1954 was very crucial and agonising for the ruling class in Pakistan and significant for the democratic forces there.

Elections took place in Pakistan in 1954 and the United Front of Leftists and progressives in East Bengal won a landslide victory on the basis of a 21-point Programme. The Muslim League was completely routed. The Programme demanded an independent foreign policy and severance of Pakistan's links with the US-sponsored military pacts like the SEATO.

On the domestic front, the programme sought the recognition of the right of self-determination of the people of different provinces constituting Pakistan. The Communist Party of Pakistan took an active part in the formation of the United Front and worked wholeheartedly for its success. The CPP won several seats (four candidates won on the CPP ticket, besides 22 party members working inside other parties) and built up a mass struggle to put pressure on the Government for implementing the promises made before the elections. The ruling junta, however, did not lie low. It was sufficiently aware of the possible repercussions of a progressive government installed in the eastern wing on the other provinces of West Pakistan.

Khwaja Nazimuddin, who hailed from East Pakistan and

⁴*New York Herald Tribune*, October 23, 1951.

was one of the few popular Muslim League leaders, was not among the blue-eyed boys of the Americans. Artificial food shortage was created to discredit him and he fell prey to American manoeuvres. Nazimuddin was dismissed in April 1953. Later, in 1962, Sardar Bahadur Khan, President Ayub Khan's own brother, charged in the National Assembly that the Americans had a hand in the ouster of Khwaja Nazimuddin. He also alleged that "most of our ills and difficulties were due to Anglo-American conspiracies," who, he said, posed as Pakistan's friends."⁶

It was alleged that the Americans had made Nazimuddin's ouster a precondition for sending food shipments. Mohammed Ali of Bogra, the then Pakistan's ambassador to the USA, was brought in a special plane to be made the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Mohammed Ali's induction into the Government heralded a new era in the Sino-Pak relationship. Along with his known strong attachment to the Americans, he made significant improvement in the Sino-Pak ties within a very short period.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Government dismissed the Fazlul Haq Ministry in East Bengal by charging that it was engaged in a conspiracy with India. The main reason for the Ministry's overthrow, was, however, its strong anti-American stand.

Public opinion was very powerful against the US-Pak military alliance, and 162 members (including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman) of the East Bengal Provincial Assembly in a joint statement asked the Central Government to scrap the agreement. The Government, instead, went ahead with the signing of the pact and unleashed heavy repression on the democratic and progressive forces to gag the voices of dissent. The GPP was banned on July 5 in East Bengal, and on July 24, 1954 in West Pakistan. There was no popular support behind the Government's policies of military alliances. Fazlur Rahman, a former Cabinet Minister, stated that the policy of military pacts was formulated at a "palace meeting."

A new era of "palace intrigues," thus, began in Pakistan and people were forced to a state of passive watchers or put

⁶*Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, June 29, 1962.*

behind the bars. For China, it was the propitious moment to start the diplomatic moves to better its ties with Pakistan. It was also the time when Pakistan allowed the American planes carrying French troops to Indo-China to land in its territory for re-fuelling.

Pakistan unhesitatingly declared in 1954 that it could not afford to remain neutral and must side with the USA. Sir Zafrulla Khan, the Foreign Minister, in an interview to an American journalist on April 12, 1954 stated: "The possibility of remaining neutral does not depend merely upon the desire of a people or a government. Left to themselves, no people or government could wish to invite the miseries and horrors of war in their own areas. Should, however, a conflict between great powers become unavoidable, the choice of neutrality might become an illusion."

This statement clearly bears out that while neutrality was not in the blood of Pakistani rulers and Pakistan had no other alternative but to align with the USA, it was clearly apprehensive that a full-scale global war would inevitably erupt between the USA and USSR. Any conflict between the USA and China was inconceivable till early sixties, as China was not considered to be so big a power as to be able to launch a world war.

In the Manila Conference, where Pakistan joined the SEATO in 1954, Foreign Minister Zafrulla Khan went out of his way to attack the Soviet Union and India. He did not say anything against China. Peking leaders were pleased by these performances of Pakistan.

Interestingly, China openly advanced its territorial claims on other Asian countries through the publication of a book, *Concise History of Modern China* in 1954. The book was supplemented by a map of the areas "which imperialism severed from China." Laos, Mongolia, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma, Malaya, Thailand and some parts of India were marked out as these areas. Though China had borders with Pakistan, no claim was made on its territory.

Pakistan was left out with the calculation that Pindi, which had similar ambitions of occupying others' territories would join China in achieving their common aims. Pakistan's proximity with some of the states on which claims were made and its

strategic importance to launch any offensive on some of them, was considered by China to be greatly helpful for the strategy. China's interest in the area along the Sinkiang region and especially in Gilgit was because of the suitability of the area for use as military bases against the Soviet Union and other Asian and African countries. These areas were close to the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan where the Americans had already set up military bases.

These factors together created a cold-war situation in the subcontinent and posed serious threat to peace in the region. Pakistan's joining the military pacts made it more bellicose and its sabre-rattling gradually reached a crescendo. China, however, did not show much concern for the cold-war situation. The US aim to subjugate the Asian and African nations qualified for easier success now due to China's favourable attitude. China did not bother about the danger inherent in the American moves. The situation not only retarded the economic growth and living conditions of the Pakistanis but also created difficulties for a number of young developing countries in this region. Most of their resources were spent on defence preparations as the cold war seriously endangered peace and security. The Asian and African peoples earlier hoped that China would endeavour to lessen tension in this area and support those forces which stood for maintenance of peace to ensure progress. China, however, sided with the forces of war like Pakistan.

Peking's overtures to Pakistan following the Bandung Conference in 1955, only helped the latter step up its bellicosity against India. China's action did not advance the cause of peace to safeguard the freedom of Asian and African nations. Peking shut its eyes to the danger of Pakistan being cultivated by the USA to make it a stepping stone to let loose a war on the USSR while egging it on to unleash war against India.

The US move was also directly connected with the wars in Vietnam, Malaya, etc. Subjugation of India would have resulted in the elimination of sizable progressive forces in this area. In this situation, China could have effectively intervened by striving at Indo-Pak amity.

Such a move would have totally thwarted the US machinations in Asia and ensured the progress of the Asian peoples, including Pakistan. The forces of democracy and peace in both India and Pakistan would have benefited if China had not kept sniping at them. An objective evaluation of the situation by China would have contributed much.

But China was guided by other considerations of power politics. It did not want to take its hands off Pakistan and leave it completely to the care of the Americans. China wanted to keep its foothold in Pakistan. But it could not be done without securing close cooperation with the military junta in Pakistan and the US Government. A compromise, thus, became imperative in China's ideology.

The democratic forces in Pakistan which had placed great faith in China's adherence to Marxism-Leninism, were naturally disappointed. When the people of Pakistan were completely disgusted with the ruling class, China was found exchanging pleasantries with it. Chinese Premier was having a tete-a-tete with Mohammed Ali at Bandung in 1953. Privately, Chou En-lai appreciated Mohammed Ali's invectives against the Soviet Union and India in spite of the fact that the Pakistani Prime Minister was a stooge of the Americans. This was also the time when popular leaders from East Bengal accused the Pindi rulers with repression and denial of people's democratic rights.

"The attitude of the Muslim League coterie," said Ataur Rahman Khan, the Awami League leader, in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in 1953, "was one of contempt towards East Bengal—towards its culture, its language, its literature and everything.... The leaders of Muslim League thought we were a subject race and they belonged to the race of conquerors."

The Maoist leadership paid no heed to the agonies of oppressed millions in Pakistan. The people's accusations against the Pakistani regime was a cry in wilderness. Peking encouraged Mohammed Ali to mediate between China and USA. At the Bandung Conference in 1953, Mohammed Ali was given the impression that China would be too willing to discuss openly all disputed problems including the Taiwan

issue with the USA.⁶ It is obvious that Mohammed Ali's initiative was not a figment of his own imagination and without the knowledge of the USA. The move, however, did not meet with much success. It is no wonder that Peking, in spite of apparently strong accusations against the USA, agreed to sit at a conference table with it. China had always desired frank discussions with the USA. Whiting, a former State Department official, testified in the US Senate on June 28, 1971: "The most succinct probing of American intentions came in 1946, when Chou En-lai advised Special Ambassador George Marshall, 'of course we will lean to one side. But how far we lean, depends upon you'."

Documents so far available show that Mao, in spite of all his extravagant talks about the "East wind prevailing over the West," was equally eager to establish direct contacts with the Americans. He chose some Americans to man a few key posts under him. The West German magazine, *Der Spiegel*, in its issue No 15 of 1970, disclosed that many Americans who worked for the war-time intelligence service, the Office of Strategic Service (OSS), had established close contacts with Mao as early as in 1941. Mao also heartily welcomed a group of US observers sent by the American Vice-President Wallace in Yenan in June 1941. The Americans were also permitted to have meteorological installations on the territory controlled by Mao and were supplied valuable data about the Japanese deployment. Reciprocating Mao's gesture, a Secretary of the US Embassy in Chungking, John Davis, asked his men to cooperate with the Chinese Communists in November 1944.

After the first meeting between Mao and Edgar Snow in 1936 in Yenan, many among the Americans who came to China settled in Peking with important assignments given by Mao himself. One of them is Sydney Rittenburg. He came to China in 1944, as interpreter for the Americans and remained in China as a Censor on Peking Radio. He remained at his post even at the height of "Cultural Revolution," and became the leader of two Red Guard organisations. Besides Anna Louise Strong, Mao's publicity chief and adviser on American affairs, Israel Epstein, another US citizen, held an important post in

⁶ *Pakistan Times*, April 28, 1955, quoted by Dr. B. N. Goswami in *Pakistan and China*.

Peking Review and *China Reconstructs*.⁷ Thus, it is seen that while the Maoists' aggressive postures did not preclude the forging of close entente with the West, they maintained good relations with Rawalpindi as a part of the prevailing power politics. Peking's approach towards Pindi was not marked by a drive for gathering friendly neighbours, it was a part of anti-Soviet and anti-India designs.

In 1955, when Soviet Premier Bulganin and Communist Party General Secretary Khrushchev during their state visit to India, unequivocally recognised Kashmir's accession to India as final, Peking chose to take a dubious stand on the issue. Although China had admitted in talks with Indian officials that Kashmir issue was a settled one and the Kashmiris have given their verdict for joining India, Peking deliberately maintained an ambiguous stand on the issue in its dealings with Pakistan, raising hopes there.

The cold-war situation; thus, gradually took a turn for the worse. Peking's double-dealing helped the Anglo-American machinations in the region. Soviet Union, which made an assessment of the situation, warned against the imminent dangers. But it failed to evoke any positive response from China. Peking, instead of standing by its Panchsheel ally, India, indirectly helped Pakistan to adopt a warlike posture. The reason for China's polemical confrontation against the Soviet Union would seem more plausible when seen against Peking's deliberate encouragement to the cold-war situation in the subcontinent. It was clear that this was only to benefit the Western powers and the USA which had created the situation and wanted to see it further deteriorate in their own interest.

China was reshaping its hegemonistic ambitions. Chinese daily *Renmin Ribao*, in an article in 1956, wrote: "We Chinese must never forget that during the rule of Han, Tang, Ming and Ching dynasties our country was also a great empire...." CPC proclaimed a course for "a prolonged coexistence of the Communist Party with the bourgeois-democratic parties and mutual control between them."

This new programme denied the leading role of the Com-

⁷"A Student in Chinese Affairs," *McIntyre*, December 5, 1970.

munist Party in society. Mao phrased his new slogan: "Let Thousand Flowers Bloom." This was aimed at eliminating Mao's opponents and paving the way for the bourgeois-democratic elements to occupy important positions in the administrative machinery. These happenings in China had also direct links with the developments in the communist world. The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956, which denounced the personality cult of Stalin, ran counter to Mao's own ideas to emerge as the indisputable leader. Mao bitterly attacked the Twentieth Congress resolutions and questioned the policy of elimination of the personality cult. Maoists also calculatedly projected the new line in order to establish what may be called the "ideological hegemony" over other fraternal parties. The Chinese delegation to the 1957 Moscow Conference of the Communist and Workers Parties sharply denounced the thesis on the possibility of peaceful transition to socialism. China was not disheartened by its failure to carry with it even a fraction of world Communist Parties and did not abandon its different line in regard to various issues.

The period following the Eighth Congress of the CPC was marked by a sharp ideological struggle inside the Chinese Communist Party. Many leading members of the CPC openly questioned Mao's wisdom of advancing an "independent" line different from that pursued by the international socialist community. Mao and his close followers put forward their own "Left" thesis to facilitate what they called "the speediest destruction of imperialism and an acceleration of the world revolution" by any means. They did not even rule out a thermonuclear war. The ideological formulations were clearly reflected in China's foreign policy too. In the new "struggle" against imperialism, the Maoists demanded the leadership of the Asian and African peoples. Nationalistic and chauvinistic aspirations of the Maoists were now reflected in China's foreign policy increasingly.

In practice, however, the cause of national liberation was relegated into the background and anti-Sovietism became the battle-cry of the Maoists. In their anti-Soviet hysteria, the Maoists were not embarrassed to find themselves in the company of the imperialists. Consciously or unconsciously, they coordinated their activities with the imperialists. Voices of

cooperation with the USA were heard even in China. While the Maoists kept up their propaganda barrage and preached the theory that war alone could be the precursor of revolution, they never for a moment forgot to talk of cooperation with the Americans.

Chou En-lai, in a speech on June 28, 1956, before the Second Session of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Conference, asserted that the Chinese people were firmly against the US war preparations. But the Chinese people, he said, "have never been hostile to the American people, nor have we ignored any action taken by the US Government that is beneficial to the relaxation of world tension. "We are willing," he told the session, "to live together in friendship with the American people. We are also willing to improve the relations between us and the United States."

Chinese armed operations in the Taiwan Straits in 1958 was a part of Peking's strategy. While, by this action, China wanted to demonstrate before the world that the Maoists were true to their words, the real intention behind the action was to involve the Soviet Union in a military conflict with the United States. This idea followed from the understanding that a world thermonuclear conflict would limit the sphere of imperialist domination or even lead to the triumph of socialism. The Maoists failed to comprehend that the "local" conflicts had all the possibilities to spark off a world war. It was this fallacious understanding that encouraged China to aggravate the cold-war situation in the subcontinent. Ideological deviations and compulsions of power politics on the other hand, obscured China's thinking about the grave implications of military pacts like CENTO and SEATO. Following the Bandung Conference, the Chinese leaders repeatedly asserted that these pacts were "defensive" and despite Pakistan's membership in these pacts, Peking leaders affirmed that there was no "conflict of interests" between Peking and Pindi.

The Maoists, obsessed with the idea of forming an anti-imperialist front led by China, favoured intensification of world tension by even committing aggression on its neighbouring countries. International tension was considered by the practical use of the anti-American potential in the "intermediary zone." The Chinese leaders held the view that world

tension bared the American imperialism and resulted in the consolidation of the anti-American forces. This thinking was originally of Mao Tse-tung's. The Chairman, in a talk with a few representatives of the Latin American Communist Parties in 1959, elucidated his theory: "A superstition exists in some countries that international tension is unfavourable for the peoples. But in conditions of international tension the Communist Parties can develop more rapidly, and the rate of their development can be higher."⁹ This, however, contradicted China's policy at that time in regard to disarmament and the banning of nuclear tests. The Chinese leaders favoured at that time the lessening of world tension even by reaching agreements with the imperialist powers.

The concept of "international tension" as a contributory factor to world revolution under the leadership of China prompted it to induce Pakistan to impair its relations with India. New Delhi's policy of non-alignment and struggle for relaxation of international tension stood as an obstacle in China's way to achieve its hegemonistic aims. India's growing prestige and increasing popularity of its policies in the Third World were not to the liking of the Chinese.

In the Chinese eyes, India appeared as their main rival for the leadership in Asia. China, therefore, attempted to denigrate India before the world, and, particularly, the Third World countries by launching aggression against her in 1950 and 1962. By these, the Chinese wanted to compel India to abandon its policy of non-alignment and strike a blow to its contacts with the Third World countries. It was no coincidence that simultaneously the USA tried to force India discard her policy of non-alignment. There was apparently a coordination of activities between China and the USA against India.

After the abortive bid to put through its line at the 1960 Conference of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow, the Chinese leadership went into oblivion. The Maoists preferred the tactics of "quiet defence" of their line and came out with a revised version. The new programme popularly known as the "Proposal on the General Line of the International Communist Movement" was published on June 14, 1963. The

⁹*Problems of Peace and Socialism, Prague, 1961.*

notable feature of the so-called "25 points" of the new programme was that it sought to isolate the national liberation movements from the world socialist system and the international working-class movement. This line was in quite conformity with the Chinese assessment that the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America had to be waged under the leadership of Chairman Mao.

The Maoists in their new line were strictly adhering to the old national-chauvinist claims made as early as 1925. One of the well-known Chinese publicists wrote then that "the Chinese proletariat will be able to play the principal role in the world revolution." These ideas were expounded through the political organ of the Central Committee of the CPC, *Hsiangtao* weekly. It was then that the theory of the centre of world revolution shifting from the Soviet Union to Peking was invented.

The basis of anti-Sovietism laid at that time became more and more strident in the course of China's economic growth compared to that of the Japanese. In the sixties when China emerged as one of the big powers to be reckoned with, the claim to leadership became more vociferous. The Maoists declared that vast areas of Asia and Africa have become "stormy centres" and "fertile ground" of world revolution. The lofty ideals of peaceful coexistence were given a go-by. Liu Ning-yi, a member of the Central Committee of the CPC, said in a special session of the World Peace Council in 1961: "Those who think that it is possible to reach an agreement with the imperialists and thus ensure peaceful coexistence are just fooling themselves."

Discarding its one-time policy, China now opted for the policy of aggression and animosity towards its immediate neighbours. Side by side, China vigorously encouraged factional struggles in the world Communist parties. Everyone who did not obey the Chinese fiat was labelled "revisionist" and accused as "traitors to Marxism." The Maoists became the staunchest champions of gun-running and made continuous efforts to precipitate international conflicts in the "intermediary zone." It was illustrated that war would speed up the world revolutionary process and "power comes from the barrel of the gun." The Chairman picked up this slogan from an ancient

Chinese philosopher, Shang Yang, of fourth century B.C. The philosopher propounded: *"If a country is poor and, at the same time, directs its efforts towards war, it will certainly become powerful, if a country is rich and, at the same time, fights with no one, it will unquestionably grow weak."*

After this ideological orientation, the Maoists determinedly started new experiments. India, then pursuing a peaceful, non-alignment policy, appeared as a road block in China's way to carry out its "revolutionary tasks" in Asia. China's effort was aimed at humiliating the Indian Government and creating socio-economic chaos inside the country to provide a congenial atmosphere for Maoist activities. It was by no means accidental that the Chinese action were coordinated with Pakistani provocations. The gamble, however, did not pay. Moscow's friendly gestures towards India and its timely intervention foiled it.

The Ayub dictatorship in Pakistan, which was then ruthlessly suppressing the democratic and progressive movements in both the wings of the country, became Mao's most trusted partner in the adventurous game. The splitting tactics paid both in Pakistan and India, albeit inadequately. In Pakistan, elements like Maulana Bhasani were held in high esteem by Peking leaders for their invaluable services. President Ayub Khan, possibly at the instruction of Peking, released Bhasani and sent him to China in 1963. The Maulana, too, faithfully and unswervingly carried out the wishes of the Chairman and became a defender of President Ayub's dictatorial regime against the mass onslaughts.

China kept on prodding Pakistan and, in 1965, extended its so-called revolutionary solidarity by supplying arms to Pakistan to let loose a war on India. The miserable economic conditions of the peoples of India and Pakistan were inconsequential to the Maoists. The Chinese support proved to be a much-needed shot in the arms of the oppressive and totally unpopular Ayub regime. The Islamabad rulers, who, since the inception of Pakistan were consciously preaching *Jehad* against India, found China's services immensely helpful. It is no secret that the Pakistani rulers, in order to perpetuate their rule, had played up the difference among various communities, suppressed the Hindu minority in East Bengal, discriminated against the

Bengali speaking majority population (more than 56 per cent of Pakistan's population) in every possible manner, worked up religious fanaticism in the name of Islam, and whipped up hysteria against India to create a war psychosis on the pretext of the "threats of aggression" from India. All these were further accentuated as a result of the prestigious Chinese support.

Maoists were able to win over a handful of Communists in Pakistan to toe their line even if it proved to be a betrayal of the popular movement against military dictatorship. These elements were led by Maulana Bhasani, and were working inside the National Awami Party, founded in 1957. They echoed the Maoists slogans and characterised the Indo-Pak conflagration as the '*people's war*.' When China decried the Tashkent Agreement after the cease-fire as "a neo-colonialist gathering," Maulana Bhasani and his followers, too, followed suit. It would be, of course, wrong to misunderstand the octogenarian Maulana and his team. They were only adhering to the Peking guidelines.

Attacking the Tashkent Agreement signed on January 10, 1966, the *Peking Review* wrote: "The course taken by Soviet leaders in the Vietnam, Indo-Pakistan and Japan questions completely conforms with requirements of imperialism and especially with latter's policy of encircling China."¹⁰ The Maoists of Pakistani brand were, therefore, quite justified in agreeing with the criticism coming from Peking and with pseudo-revolutionaries like Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Maulana Bhasani, following Bhutto's ouster from the Cabinet was the guiding spirit of the former Pakistani Foreign Minister. Mao's followers explained that their defence of the Ayub regime was because of its pro-Chinese character, even though it was anti-people. They were inspired by observation of such important Maoists like the Chinese Foreign Minister Marshal Chen Yi. The Peking leader, during a state visit to Rawalpindi in 1966, said in Lahore: "Under the leadership of President Mohammed Ayub Khan, the Pakistani people united as one and filled with a common hatred towards the enemy, triumphed over the enemy...and finally repulsed the aggressor in safeguarding the independence

¹⁰Peking Review, February 4, 1966.

and sovereignty of their country...¹¹ The guidelines for the Maoists in Pakistan were thus outlined by the Peking leaders themselves. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Maoists and the oppressive Ayub regime not only coexisted peacefully but closely cooperated under the inspiring leadership of Chairman Mao.

At the international level, the Maoists uncompromisingly fought for its own line even at the cost of division in the world progressive and democratic ranks. The Maoists could not help if the imperialists were benefited or felt exalted by this disunity. The Communist Party of the USA, for instance, was subjected to severe reprimand by Peking owing to its failure to toe Maoism. In a vituperative attack, the *Peking Review* editorially branded the US Communist Party leadership as "willing apologists for US imperialism, helping to deceive the people of the world."¹² The occasion for this comment was the US Communists' failure to agree to the Maoists' assessment of the Latin American countries. The Maoists were annoyed that the US Communists refused to agree to the Chairman's profound evaluation that "the world village—Asia, Africa and Latin America—is beginning to surround the world city—North America and Western Europe." The task of overpowering "the world city," the Maoists claimed, could be accomplished and taken to its logical end only by relying on the power of the rifle. The policy of "peaceful coexistence" could not, therefore, be regarded any more as a path for people's progress. The theoretical organ of the CPC Central Committee, *Hung Chi*, wrote in 1962: "There can exist no doubt that peaceful coexistence is erroneous, anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist. Because it actually means never-ending indulgence, never-ending compromise, never-ending concessions to imperialism. The only outcome of this will be the conversion of peaceful coexistence into quite opposite."

Hence, the Maoists prepared themselves to put their theory into practice. A very crude example of it was available in the Indonesian incident. The Maoists did succeed in convincing President Sukarno that the countries of Asia and Africa had a

¹¹*Pakistan Times*, March 30, 1968.

¹²*Peking Review*, March 8, 1963.

leading role to play in the ultimate emancipation of mankind, and the UN which was an "organisation of dominant states" must be replaced by a "new revolutionary organisation" of which the Asian people would be the backbone and guiding force. The then Indonesian Government, misled by the Maoists, withdrew from the UN. But the shock came when none else fell prey to Mao's "magic amulet" and no other country followed Indonesia's course. Still greater blow came when the abortive coup on September 30, 1965, resulted in the massacre of thousands of Communist revolutionaries. The oppression was so brutal and the impact so disastrous that even now the Maoists would shudder to think of repeating such adventures.

The response to the Chinese wooing in other countries was not enthusiastic. Relentless efforts of the Maoists did not pay well. They failed to win over the socialist camp followers in the Afro-Asian countries. The Chinese, however, did not stop expressing openly displeasure at the growing influence of the socialist world in Asia and Africa. The head of the Chinese delegation to the 'Third Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, held in Moshi (Tanganyika) in February 1963, stated clearly "The countries of Eastern Europe should not interfere in the affairs of Asia and Africa. We regret in general that you have come here. What is the need of your presence here? Your presence is an insult to the Afro-Asian solidarity movement.... You can do as you please, but we shall be against you."¹³

The Chinese delegation unsuccessfully tried to impress upon other representatives that since the Russians, Czechs and Poles belonged to the white race, one "can't rely on them," for they were capable of "making a deal with the white Americans at any moment."¹⁴ But even all these could not save the Maoists. Their slogans and exhortations now adorn only the walls of some of the world cities, albeit uninspiringly. They failed to incite the followers to seize the cities.

It would, however, be wrong to conclude that Peking, while pursuing its ill-conceived policies unremittingly, was not inclined to offer any accommodation to the USA. One would also be foolish to think that China left its marriage with the USA

¹³*Neues Deutschland*, September, 1970.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

unconsummated. The Western states accounting for 80 per cent of the Chinese foreign trade, had special appeal for China, and, like all clever businessmen, the Maoists conducted brisk trade with the racist and colonialist governments of South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal. China, till this date, has not disturbed the British outpost Hong Kong despite the fact that the Chinese constitute 98 per cent of the population. The area is a smugglers' paradise for gold and narcotics between China and the West. The Maoists, in view of these factors, are not unduly worried over the negation of their own theory that *China is whatever is populated by the Chinese*. The Maoists have no time to attend to the reminders of the admirers of the Chinese traditions. A West African magazine, *Advance*, for instance, frankly said that Peking should slander the Russians less and be more concerned with the liberation of such territories to which it lay claim of ownership—Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao—from the colonial yoke.

One can also discover without much effort the warm cordiality existing between the USA and China in regard to Vietnam war. In spite of frequent broadsides against US imperialism, the Maoists did have US assurance to Peking that the spectre of death-sowing American bombers would not haunt the Chinese territory in exchange for the Chinese assurance that its "volunteers" would not stand shoulder to shoulder with the heroic Vietnamese fighters.

The Maoists never felt guilty of their actions in delaying overland transit of the essential Soviet supplies to Vietnam. It was reported in the *New York Times*, in the wake of sensational disclosures of the Pentagon documents, that the Johnson Government decided to work out a strategic plan of air-raids on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 7, 1964. In February and March 1965, US bombers devastated hundreds of villages and towns in Vietnam. China joined in the world-wide protest against this diabolical action of the USA. But even in the midst of all these, it never lost its sense of pragmatism. In January 1965, Chairman Mao assured Edgar Snow in Peking with confidence that the Chinese will fight only in case the Americans attacked them.

These actions of China, however, helped the Asian and African people to understand more clearly the motives of the

Maoists. The people whom Chairman Mao dreamt to cast in his self-prescribed mould left no time in totally exposing the self-proclaimed Chairman. Mao was now convinced that he had failed and started "cultural revolution" to save himself from the critics within the country who were eagerly waiting for such an opportunity. Mao did not want to give the impression that his theories were no more worth practising. He held out the view that the "cultural revolution" would provoke "popular wars" on a global scale. The Maoists with the solid backing of the Chinese army and using the misguided youth let loose orgies of "purification campaign" in China. National liberation heroes like Liu Shao-chi were the prominent casualties of the "cultural revolution."

The Maoists emphatically declared that Mao's "spiritual thoughts" would unfurl the banner of revolution in the capitals of other countries. Very few were, however, able to perceive the meaning of the Chairman's message in spite of the grotesque display of the Maoists. In Burma, for instance, the Maoists had to pay a heavy price for attempting to import "cultural revolution." Many Communist revolutionaries laid down their lives without an iota of success to their credit. Beating a hasty retreat after such a debacle, was logical and a matter of time only.

Although it was customary for the Chinese papers like the *Red Flag* and *People's Daily* to claim in January 1969 that the "cultural revolution" has gained a "great and resolute victory," Chairman Mao himself candidly said in April 1969, "we cannot speak of final victory...; Neither can we speak of it, in the coming decades. The rash statement about the final victory of the revolution in our country is erroneous and does not correspond to facts." While this was only an indication of the Chairman's inimitable skill to spell out plainly the strategy and tactics, the *Peking Radio* with much fanfare announced on November 26, 1968, the intention of the Chinese leadership to come to an agreement on the principles of peaceful coexistence with no other than the USA itself. The new policy gained respectability with official stamp put on it by Mao's heir-apparent, Lin Biao. In his report to the Ninth Congress of the CPC, Lin Biao stated with clarity that China would continue to advocate the policy of peaceful coexistence.

The new policy did not, however, call for the abandonment

of strategic aims and objectives of China's foreign policy. The Maoists repeated the call to fight against the "monopolies of two super-powers"—Soviet Union and the USA. The theory of "intermediary zone" was also not discarded. In a talk with French newsmen, Chinese leaders reiterated that China alone was capable of putting an end to the world domination by two "super-powers." In this respect, China sharply differed with other adherents of Marxism and Leninism that society was divided in two classes—the working class and the capitalist class. Peking was not in agreement with the view that basic class struggle was between the socialist states and the capitalist states led by the USA. Asserting that China had a right to create some kind of a bloc of small and medium powers to form a "third force" under the aegis of Peking, the Chinese leaders openly talked about "the evils of power politics of super-powers."¹⁵ The Peking leaders, convinced about the correctness of their understanding, equated with ease the role of the Soviet Union and the USA, in West Asia, Africa, Latin America and Indo China. This, however, did not prevent the Peking leaders from inviting the President of the USA for an exchange of views with Chairman Mao and settle for a concerted world policy.

It is interesting to note here that in spite of his irreconcilable crusader against imperialism, Mao Tse-tung, was more interested than his followers to start the "ping-pong" diplomacy with the USA. According to a UPI report from Peking, Premier Chou En-lai disclosed that the decision to invite the US table-tennis players was taken by Mao at a time when the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the US State Department attitude was to wait for a while.¹⁶ Chou En-lai on his part told the Americans: "China agrees with the US President Mr. Nixon that this is an era of negotiations, but Chinese leaders also believe that, if necessary, it is an era of armed struggle."¹⁷ It could be an assurance that China would be prepared to fight against everybody except the USA and its close allies.

It is indeed ironical that the Chinese leaders who used to denounce any attempts by the Soviets towards the lessening of

¹⁵*New York Times*, June 9, 1971.

¹⁶UPI, *Statesman*, October 7, 1971.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

world tensions as "revisionism," "betrayal of the revolution," and "collaboration with the US imperialism," are literally engaged now in mad frenzy of competition with America in wooing each other to bully the Soviet Union and its ally in world peace, India. Needless to say, the approach of China stems from its big-power chauvinism against which it has remained so far one of the unrivalled propagandists. Peking by its actions was able to convince the US imperialists that the former had an irrepressible desire to hobnob with the latter even by discarding its avowed principles and turning to an enemy of the Soviet Union. It was only logical for the USA to reciprocate the Chinese feeling.

This becomes very clear from the comments of John K. Fairbank, a Harvard professor of Chinese history in his article published in the *New York Times* of May 18, 1971 :

A Sino-American thaw has been on the cards ever since the Sino-Soviet split of a decade ago. That the recent Sino-US thaw has for its object the desire to play off China against Soviet Union, is evident from the interview which President Nixon gave to Howard K. Smith, an ABC Commentator in last July. Thus Nixon is reported to have suggested regularisation of relations with Soviet Union's 'neighbouring opponent' as a counter-measure to the so-called tough stance adopted by the former. Nixon told Smith, 'no one knows what information and advantage might come once channels have been opened.

For the USA and Nixon personally, the smiling approach would be a contributory factor to reach a unanimity of understanding. President Nixon can hopefully look forward to wriggle out of the Vietnam fiasco with Mao's favourable attitude.

Mao, too, with the help of American support can intensify his efforts to cause further damage and confusion in the socialist camp. The Maoists can successfully put the Afro-Asian countries at loggerheads and use their differences to its own advantage, according to the thoughts of Mao. The Chinese calculations are clearly reflected in the resurrection of an old Chinese theory by Premier Chou En-lai. The Chinese leader told his American guests that "only when one dares to engage in war, can one

negotiate, and if one wants peaceful negotiations, he must be prepared against war."

This throws sufficient light on why China is interested in promoting a cold-war situation throughout the world. This helps to advance China's nationalist goals. It contributes greatly in deepening the anti-Soviet sentiments in the world. It is this idea that moves the Chinese leaders to preserve the hotbeds of tension in the Taiwan straits, Indo-Pak borders and elsewhere. These are favourable factors for wresting concessions from the Americans. The USA in its turn does not mind conceding a few points to China in order to maintain its foothold in Afro-Asian countries. The USA having already reconciled to China's entry into the UN, did not even make a fuss over the expulsion of Taiwan from it.

The Sino-US motivations do not, however, go unnoticed by the countries which are directly involved and affected. The emphasis of Hanoi's criticism of the Nixon doctrine following the announcement of Mao's invitation to the US President, is significant. The Vietnamese people are categorical that the big powers have no right to strike any deal which may harm the interests of small nations.

In its relations with Pakistan, China was not unduly panicked over the US influence on Pindi. It is bothered about its own immediate objectives which are in conformity with the Chinese nationalistic and hegemonistic goals. Pakistan can be an ally of Peking as long as it does not stand in the way of China's strivings to secure a firm foothold in the South and South-East Asia and pressurise India. It is thus conceivable that power politics is the main factor responsible for what may be called the zigzags in China's national and foreign policies.

In regard to imperialist countries, China's policy has been a peculiar combination of vociferous anti-Americanism along with mutual understanding with imperialism on political issues. In its relations with Pakistan, remarkable restraint has been shown by Peking. Pakistani leaders, too, with their gifted flexibility, did not find any difficulty in befriending Mao's China. Pakistan's thinking, according to experts, has been :

If Britain, one of the kingpins in the Western military bloc and a member of the SEATO and CENTO, can maintain

friendly relations with Peking and conduct substantial volume of trade with China, there is no reason why Pakistan should have the slightest qualm or hesitation in befriending and trading with its great Asian neighbour, China.¹⁵

The Maoists on the other hand, followed the dictum :
Whoever is not against us is with us.

CHAPTER FOUR

Soviet and Chinese Attitudes

IN CONTRAST WITH the identically partisan US and Chinese stands, the Soviet Union maintained a clear and impartial posture during the turbulent days of the biggest liberation struggle in Asia of the Bangla Desh people, ever since March 25, 1971. The Soviet assessment of the situation made it frame its policy in conformity with its avowed principles of support and sympathy for the oppressed people everywhere. Moscow was not swayed by any pretensions whatsoever and refused to condone the barbaric crimes of the West Pakistani military junta in East Bengal.

The Soviet people attached due importance to the human rights and their sympathy was not limited to mere words. It was sanctified by active political and material help to the destitute people of East Bengal. Not only did the Soviet Union send relief material worth millions of rupees but also defended the East Bengal people's rights to shape their own destiny at international forums like the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council, ignoring Chinese invectives and American double-talk.

The Soviet Press reflecting the popular mood always gave objective analysis of the developments culminating into the liberation struggle of 75 million Bengalis and their glorious the victory with the active support and sympathy of India and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Communist Party organ, *Pravda*, tracing the background of the events in East Bengal, pointed out in an article on November 23, 1971: "The crisis touched off in East Pakistan by the repressive actions of the Rawalpindi military authorities, has become a source of tension on the entire subcontinent...." The commentator, P. Mezentsev, minced no words in holding the Yahya regime responsible for not allowing the victorious Awami League to assume power, and blamed the military administration for pushing more than ten million people into India.

The writer was understandably not impressed by Yahya Khan's so-called amnesty due to the fact that world press including those sympathetic with the regime, continued reporting savage brutality of the West Pakistani army in East Bengal. The commentary also expressed concern about the misdeeds of the chauvinistic elements in connivance with the administration. These elements, according to the paper, staged demonstrations "with official permission under the slogans of declaring a 'holy war against India', of 'completely crushing India,' etc." Observing that these actions were nothing but naked provocations and unhelpful for any speedy solution of the problem, the paper reiterated the demand for a "political settlement."

"The military administration must stop reprisals against the East Pakistani population and take measures for creating necessary conditions, enabling millions of people to return home," the paper demanded.

Again, when the conflict broke out between India and Pakistan on December, 3, 1971, *Pravda* analysed the causes leading to the conflagration. The paper's political commentator Viktor Mayevsky, in an article on December 10-11, 1971 assessed that the alliance of monopoly capital and feudals, which ruled Pakistan had been waging an offensive since long against the democratic forces of the country which demanded economic and political rights. The forces, which drew the country into military pacts like CENTO and SEATO pursued a discriminatory policy towards East Bengal in order to defend the interests of West Pakistani capitalists, were responsible for pushing the country into another war with India.

The article, referring to the suspension of the US military

and economic aid to India and the continued military and economic help to Pakistan, pointed out that "this can hardly be described as an "absolute neutrality." The paper also mentioned the Chinese activities and observed that these were "essentially aimed at fanning up the Indo-Pakistani conflict, and pouring oil on the fire...." Describing Peking's action as "open betrayal of the struggle of the East Pakistani people for their vital rights," the commentator noted: "Fanning up the Indo-Pakistani conflict, the Maoists are actually trying to conduct the policy of setting Asians against Asians, the policy that is very similar to the 'Guam Doctrine' of the United States." The paper referred to the close Sino-US cooperation in the UN as an attempt to prolong the conflict for the success of their narrow aims.

The commentator significantly pointed out that the Indo-Pakistani conflict caused grave concern to the Soviet Union because it was taking place "close to the frontiers of the Soviet Union, and, consequently, touch upon the interests of its security." Reiterating Soviet Union's policy of peace in this respect, the writer reflected his country's anxiety for the "ending of the bloodshed, for peaceful political settlement of the problems with due account for the legitimate rights of the people, without any interference of external forces, for the creation of the conditions for the enduring and just peace in the area."

In fact, the Soviet concern at the developments in the subcontinent since the genocide launched by West Pakistan army on March 25, 1971, in East Bengal, had become most annoying for the rulers in Islamabad, Peking and Washington. From these three capitals had come forth a renewed and intensive anti-Soviet propaganda coupled with open and covert insinuations against the Indian sympathies towards the people's revolt in East Bengal.

Nikolai Podgorny, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in an official communique to Yahya Khan on April 3, 1971, expressed concern over the numerous casualties, and the sufferings of the people of Bangladesh. The communique also significantly referred to the arrest and persecution of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other elected representatives of the people and warned that continuation of repressive measures and bloodshed in East Pakistan

will undoubtedly only make the solution of the problem more difficult and may do great harm to the vital interests of the entire people of Pakistan.

It was, however, not for the first time that the Soviet Government and the people had disapproved of Pindi's anti-people actions. Since the formation of Pakistan in 1947, till the present carnage in Bangladesh the USSR had always stood by the side of democratic and progressive forces in Pakistan.

While China and other Western powers were deliberately unmindful of the rabid reactionary character of the ruling clique in Pakistan and the unchecked bigoted influence of the religious Ulemas on the ruling hierarchy, the Soviet Union never failed to clearly differentiate between the pro-people democratic and anti-people reactionary forces. Stalin, remarked in 1953, in course of an interview with the then Indian ambassador to the USSR, K.P.S. Menon: "How primitive it is, for a state to be based on religion."¹

Still earlier, a Soviet paper *Bolshevik* wrote on June 15, 1948, that the British colonialists, working against the national interests of united India, actively encouraged the formation of a separate state by the Muslims: The commentator, M. Alexsiev, observed that it was mainly the Muslim feudal-landlords and the representatives of monopoly bourgeoisie who supported the British Government's plan. He stated, that the Mountbatten Plan to divide India, published on June 3, 1947, was the result of an understanding between the British Government, Indian bourgeoisie and Muslim landlords. Alexsiev noted that on August 15, 1947, India was divided into two separate States—Hindustan and Pakistan on the basis of national religion and community. He also pointed out that the Hindu-Muslim problem which forced the division of India not only deteriorated further but the led to bloody clashes after the division of Punjab. A similar situation was created in East Bengal, resulting in the exodus of millions into West Bengal. While this assessment of the Soviet Union about the reactionary character of the Pakistani ruling junta had greatly influenced almost all future actions of the Russians in regard

to Pakistan, China avoided taking a clear-cut stand on the progressive people's movement in Pakistan.

In all pro-West actions of Pakistan, Soviet Union reacted sharply. In 1954, the Soviet Union characterised Pakistan's joining the pro-US military pact, SEATO, as "an unfriendly act." Soviet Premier Khrushchev told plainly in 1955: "We did not like the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) at all." In another note in April 1955, the Soviet Government stated that it had no sympathy for Pakistan Government which forced the country to join the military-political alliances such as the CENTO and SEATO. It is also noteworthy that after the notorious U-2 incident, the Soviet Union in a strong note of protest to Pakistan warned that if such actions are repeated from Pakistan's territory, it will be compelled to take proper retaliatory measures.¹ Even in regard to this sinister incident, China took great care not to criticise the American stooges in Pakistan. Referring to the incident, a Pakistan writer commented that although it was rumoured that the U-2 visited Sinkiang, the Chinese Government, Radio and its press "gave vent to their ire against the USA, carefully avoiding any direct indictment of Pakistan."²

The present stand of the Soviet Union is, therefore, consistent with its earlier actions in regard to the happenings in Pakistan. Soviet Premier Kosygin, during Mrs Indira Gandhi's last visit to Moscow, had categorically stated that it was impossible to justify Pakistan's action in East Bengal and urged for an immediate "political solution" based on "the wishes, the inalienable rights and the lawful interests of the people of East Bengal." Differing from the Chinese view, the Soviet leaders have stated that the issue of Bangladesh could not be considered as an "internal affair" of Pakistan. Unlike the instigation of the Chinese leaders to Pindi's marauders, Kosygin clarified that the USSR's support could "never be enjoyed" by those who commit such bestiality as had been done in East Bengal and its sympathies were with the "democratic forces of Pakistan."

Indignation had assumed mass a form and public meetings

¹Asian Recorder, 1960.

²Qutubuddin Ahmed in *Foreign Policy of Pakistan*, op. cit. pp. 74-96.

were held all over the Soviet Union in protest against the barbaric actions of the Islamabad military junta in East Bengal. The Soviet people recorded their unanimous disapproval of the actions of the Pakistan Government and called for an immediate solution so that the hapless millions who fled from their homeland could return with honour and dignity. The millions who were driven out by the West Pakistani hordes were not considered as "saboteurs" as had been done by the Peking leaders.

The organ of the Communist Party of Soviet Union, *Pravda*, in a commentary on October 7, 1971, said that the tragedy of the millions in East Bengal could not but cause concern to the progressive world public. There was not much room for disagreement with the fact that unbearable living conditions in East Bengal compelled the people there to seek refuge in the adjoining Indian state of West Bengal and no progressive-minded human being could be oblivious of this. How was it possible for the Peking leaders to turn a deaf ear to the agonies of the millions who by any yardstick could be called oppressed, must remain a mystery to all those who had regards for the Chinese people.

The Soviet people in their unmistakable stand in support of human dignity, honour and civilisation, were not overwhelmed by narrow power politics and sought a speedy remedy for the miseries of people in any part of the world. They had no sympathy for those who denied democratic rights to the people. A *Pravda* commentary underlined this very clearly:

Mankind cannot remain indifferent to the tragedy of millions of absolutely innocent people. The public expect the Pakistani authorities to take immediate effective measures for the return of the refugees to their homes, guaranteeing their peaceful life and work in their native land.⁴

Standing in sharp contrast to these statements of genuine concern at the suppression of the innocent and unarmed people, Chou En-lai's message to Yahya Khan on April 12, 1971 contains the usual diatribes against the Soviet Union and

⁴*Pravda*, October 7, 1971.

India. Chinese leaders lost no time in discovering the possibility of an Indian attack on Pakistan and gave the assurance that :

Should Indian expansionists dare to launch aggression against Pakistan, the Chinese Government and people will, as always, firmly, support the Pakistan Government and people in their just struggle to safeguard the state's sovereignty and national independence.*

There is nothing new in this latest discovery of China. 'This is' part of the old tactics to cover up the Chinese mistake in lending support to an utterly reactionary regime in Pakistan.

**Times of India*, quoting Radio Pakistan broadcast of April 12, 1971.

CHAPTER FIVE

Mutual Understanding at Bandung

THE FIRST MEETING between the Prime Minister of Pakistan and China at the 29-nation Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries (from April 18 to April 24, 1955) was a turning point in the Sino-Pak relations. While observers have repeatedly described this meeting as an "important landmark" heralding "a new phase of closer cooperation," the meeting of minds began much earlier. As has been mentioned earlier, the assurance of close cooperation came from no less a person than Mao Tse-tung himself. Replying to a speech of Pakistan ambassador Sultanuddin Ahmed, stationed in Peking, Chairman Mao stated with confidence that "from now on, the friendly relations between our two countries will grow closer with each passing day on the existing basis."¹ This statement of Chairman Mao proved beyond doubt that Sino-Pak friendship was already at an advanced stage and a rupture in it was only a remote possibility.

The meeting between Premiers Chou En-lai and Moham-mad Ali held in this background of warm friendship, could not conclude without making significant headway, notwithstanding Pakistan's deep involvement with the Western military blocs and the USA. Pakistan took no chance and to ensure success sought the assistance of the former Pakistan ambassador

¹NCNA, April, 1955.

to Peking, Raza, in this regard. Raza, with his previous knowledge of the Chinese mind, was sent to Bandung in advance. He succeeded in arranging a 90 minute meeting between Chou En-lai and Mohammed Ali on April 21, 1955. The two leaders felt the need to meet again on April 25. The exchange of views during these private meetings not only set [the tone of the two leaders' statements during the conference but also outlined the guidelines of the future relations between their two countries. The talks in this sense were too important to be ignored. It was at these meetings that both China and Pakistan rediscovered their common objectives.

The timing of the meeting was very significant for Pakistan. After the ruthless suppression of the progressive and democratic movements and banning of the Communist Party, Peking's friendship provided an excellent opportunity to the Pindi rulers to uphold their democratic pretensions which was not possible from their relations with the USA and SEATO and CENTO partners. Nothing would have been more precious than the Chinese support at this juncture.

Pakistani rulers as well as their mentors in Washington realised fully the utility of Chinese plaudits. The outcome of the Bandung Conference was more than what the Pakistani generals could dream of. No doubt, Mohammed Ali played his cards well. He had a clear idea of the Chinese leaders' mind when he remarked at the Conference that "the Soviet Union was an imperialistic nation with satellites which had brought many people under its heel." While this anti-Soviet outburst could be the result of a Chinese hint at an imminent Sino-Soviet rift, it was intended to convey that Pakistan was right in being aligned with the West to defend itself against threats from the Soviet Union. Mohammed Ali also shrewdly placated China by pointing out that "We have the friendliest relations with China; China is certainly not imperialistic, she has not brought any other country under her heel." The statement of Mohammed Ali was a certificate to the effect that China was peace-loving and genuinely interested in preserving peace in South-East Asia in contrast with Soviet Union's "expansionist intentions."

China had reasons to feel happy at the Pakistani performance. It would have been unfriendly if China did not in

turn reward Pakistan in terms of political and moral support. It was reasonably hoped that the China would do the "right" thing to please Pakistan. It was essential for Pakistan to get a categorical support from China justifying Pakistan's membership in the military pacts. This support would have absolved Pakistan of the charge that it had become an appendage of the USA to further its designs against India. In other words, Mohammed Ali sought in return a similar compliment that he had given to China.

The Chinese Premier readily complied. He said in no uncertain terms that there was complete unanimity of understanding between the two countries laying the basis for closer cooperation. Chou En-lai stated clearly that the Pakistani Prime Minister had assured him:

Although Pakistan was a party to a military treaty, Pakistan was not against China, Pakistan had no fear that China would permit aggression against her. As a result of that we achieved mutual understanding although we are still against military treaties. The Prime Minister of Pakistan further assured that if the United States launched a global war; Pakistan would not be involved in it...I am grateful to him for this explanation because through these explanations we achieve mutual understanding.²

This statement of the Chinese Premier unambiguously explained that China was not apathetic to Pakistan's alignment with the USA as long as it did not harm China's interests in South-East Asia. Chou En-lai also resorted to a laboured explanation to demarcate Pakistan's military pact with the USA from other similar alliances. The Pak-US military pact, according to China, could be used against anybody except Peking. From China's point of view, therefore, there was nothing wrong with Pakistan's aggressive designs against India. Such an approach to the military pacts was necessary to hide China's contradictory postures. For it does not require extraordinary political acumen to expose the Chinese hypocrisy in opposing the military treaties and also achieving mutual understanding with Pakistan.

²K. Sarwar Hassan, Ed., *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1966.

Although the Conference turned out to be a tremendous success for both the countries, Pakistan was able to play not only its own politics exceptionally well but also the game of the USA by studying the receptivity of the Chinese mind. Mohammed Ali succeeded in untying the hearts of the Chinese in relation to the USA. Considering Mohammed Ali as a trusted agent of the USA, Chou En-lai confided hopefully that Peking leaders were not averse to an entente with the USA as had been demonstrated by the Sino-Pak cordiality. The Chinese leaders created the feeling that if Pakistan, while being an appendage to the USA, could qualify for intimacy with Peking, there was no reason why the USA should not expect the same.

"The element of mutual trust generated in their meetings at Bandung," commented one Pakistani observer, "was so substantial that Mohammed Ali in his last meeting with Chou urged the release of American airmen detained in China."³ The airmen were subsequently released.

As has been already mentioned, direct Sino-US contacts were established much earlier. Pakistan could not claim to be the solitary promoter of Peking-Washington entente. Mohammed Ali's initiative, though not surprising, evoked considerable interest. What is more important is that both Pakistan and China gained equally from the Bandung Conference. China, by its effort and active cooperation was able to insert an important clause into the "Ten Principles" adopted at the Conference upholding Pakistan's right to join the military pacts for self-defence against foreign aggression. The "Ten Principles" proclaimed by the Conference with the full support of China not only exonerated Pakistan from the charge of conspiring aggression against Asian countries, particularly India, but also dealt a heavy blow to the peace-loving Afro-Asian nations' policy of non-alignment. This was a direct affront to India which was fighting courageously to defend its peaceful foreign policy.⁴

This action of China exposed in full measure the duplicity and opportunism in China's foreign relations. For it was less than a year before that China signed the 1954 agreement of

³*Foreign Policy of Pakistan, An Analysis*, pp. 74-95.

⁴B. N. Goswami, *Pakistan and China*, 'Op. Cit', p. 41.

peaceful coexistence, friendship and cooperation with India. Despite the fact that China was held in high esteem by the Indian people, and Nehru ungrudgingly projected China's image before the Afro-Asian nations represented at the Conference, China did not hesitate to endorse the Pakistani statement branding India as an aggressive country. Peking's motivations were quite clear. It was vigorously pursuing its own nationalist aims without any compunction for ideology or principles. Peking was not hopeful that India would abjure its friendship with the Soviet Union, or vice versa. Propping up of the military regime was, therefore, calculated to be a sound investment. China's appreciation of Pakistani concern vindicated the US policy of bolstering up the Pindi military outfit. The US policy was aimed at jeopardising the promotion of peace and friendship among the newly liberated Afro-Asian nations.

The United States formulated its South-East Asia policy, taking into full consideration the immediate intentions of China in relation to India and the imminent Sino-Soviet clash. The USA had also in mind the question of Pakistan's entry into CENTO in July 1955 and was not interested in doing anything which might rouse suspicion. The Chinese, too, realised the need to keep Pakistan in good humour in the event of a showdown with the USSR and India. Peking, therefore, conveyed through a note to Pakistan, an assurance that China did not conceive any "clash of interest" with Pindi. The Chinese leaders stressed the point that in view of the "convergence of interests" and "identity of objectives," the two countries must endeavour to further promote the existing accord.

This was clearly evident from the disclosure of an authoritative observer of Pakistani scene, L.F. Rushbrook Williams, in his book, *The State of Pakistan*:

Following the Bandung Conference Karachi received—as I have been assured on unimpeachable authority—a private message from Peking. The Chinese People's Government assured the Government of Pakistan that there was no conceivable clash of interests between the two countries which could imperil their friendly relations: but that this position did not apply to Indo-Chinese relations in which a

definite conflict of interests could be expected in the near future.

The author was of the opinion that following this broad hint, Pakistan took extra care in filling the gaps and worked for the success of the Chinese line. Pakistan in effect engaged itself in precipitating a Sino-Indian conflict. The Chinese note left no room for any doubt that Peking valued Pakistani friendship more than it did for the Indian. China dispelled whatever lingering suspicion was there in Pakistani mind. Peking made it clear that what Pindi was actually trying to achieve with huge material and military assistance from the USA and other allies would be facilitated by the Chinese activities against India. By then the policy-makers in Washington could also get a clear picture that the Pindi-Peking-Washington understanding strived for the same objective—forcing India to abandon its policy of non-alignment with power blocs and to join the US bandwagon.

It is also to be noted in this context that a decisive change in the US policy was effected following the Presidential election in 1952 and the beginning of the John Foster Dulles-era. It was known to all, that Dulles had a particular aversion to India's non-alignment policy and he devotedly worked for its destruction. He once expressed the belief that Pakistan could be counted to serve as "a dependable bulwark against communism."

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Radford, who was in full agreement with Dulles, also asserted that "we have in Pakistan a very fine, loyal anti-communist ally." This reference to communism was certainly not about the Chinese variety. A clear demarcation was made, as has been mentioned earlier, between the Chinese and Russian Communism long ago. Utility of Pakistan in subverting Communism or halting influence in the Third World, was therefore, in regard to Russian Communism.

The Soviet Union, which stood by India in her days of trials was naturally a target of the Pak-US hostility. Soviet Union's support to India's foreign policy never evoked interest in the official circles in Pindi and Washington. China's joining hands with Pakistan to isolate India only served the purpose

of Dulles' notorious "policy of brinkmanship." While Dulles considered non-alignment as immoral, Mao Tse-tung viewed it as no more than a brand of capitalism. The two, therefore, vied with each other to put an end to India's non-alignment policy. Pakistan's choice was too limited, and it was logical for it to fall in line with Peking and Washington. A unique relationship was thus established and developed with the common objective of harassing India in every possible way.

It was in this background that the Bandung Conference registered the success of the Sino-Pak policy vis-a-vis India. The improvement in the relations set off a stream of visits of distinguished personalities from one country to the other. Within a short period, following the Bandung Conference, a Chinese women's delegation led by China's Health Minister Madam Li Teh Chuan visited Pakistan, late in 1955, at the invitation of the All-Pakistan Women's Association. Pakistan, which moved in the meantime another step towards the Western camp by joining the CENTO in July 1955, was not considered, a haunted land where the imperialists cast their dark shadows.

While the majority in Pakistan condemned the rulers' craze for military pacts, China was not unduly alarmed by Pakistan's action. Peking was not distressed by the threat to peace in the subcontinent and aggravation of the existing coldwar situation in the region. China feared the loss of Pakistani friendship. The *People's Daily* posed before itself the question how China was "to be reconciled with Pakistan's expressed desire to maintain friendship with China."³ Pakistan was justifiably impressed by this mild self-criticism of China. Although the Pindi rulers were well known for their poor stock of words necessary for diplomatic niceties, Pakistan described the Chinese comment as "dignified Chinese attitude of restrained criticism." A noted Pakistani observer, Mohammed Khalid, analysing the Chinese mind, wrote: "It is significant to note that China, though distasteful of the SEATO and CENTO, never attacked Pakistan openly for her alliances, as the USSR did."⁴

A month after Pakistan joined the CENTO, the Chinese leaders like Chou En-lai expressed desire for more frequent

³*Asian Recorder*, 1955.

⁴Mohammed Khalid, *Welfare State, A Case Study of Pakistan*, Royal Book Co., Karachi, 1964, pp. 191.

cultural and economic intercourse with Pakistan. Speaking at a celebration of Pakistan Independence Day on August 14, 1955 in Peking, the Chinese Premier observed that "Sino-Pak relations had been strengthened in the past few years and these will be further promoted and our cultural and economic intercourse will become more and more frequent."

The year 1956 and the period following it was significant for the Pakistani rulers, as important Chinese leaders during their visits to Pakistan repeatedly conferred on it the title of a peace-loving nation. Madam Soon Ching Ling (widow of Dr Sun Yat-sen), Vice-President of the Chinese Republic, and Marshal Ho-lung, the Vice-Premier of China, were among the most important dignitaries to visit Pakistan in the first quarter of 1956. The understanding reached at these meetings necessitated formalisation at the highest level.

The political change in Pakistan, again, as a result of the US machinations, brought another US friend, Choudhury Mohammed Ali, to the office of Prime Minister in August 1955. The task of carrying the US message in the guise of Pakistani goodwill and friendship to China fell on Mohammed Ali, who announced his decision to visit China. But he could not undertake the journey owing to his illness and his subsequent ouster due to internal political bickerings.

The timing of proposed visit was, however, significant. The condition of the people had further deteriorated than it was even under the British colonial rule. In their agonising self-reappraisal they wondered whether even after nine years of freedom, they were citizens of an independent country with any democratic right in their possession.

Pakistan Times, in an article on August 14, 1956, marking the ninth anniversary of the birth of Pakistan, put it quite bluntly that anybody who was not in agreement with the decrepit creatures in the Government palaces, anyone who objected to the curtailment of civil liberties or the indiscriminate use of emergency laws, was slandered either as a fool or a traitor.

Only the loyalists and followers of status quo in Pakistan were, therefore, left out for enjoying Chinese hospitality and friendship. H.S. Suhrawardy became the Prime Minister of

Pakistan in September 1956; after being nominated by the pro-US President Iskander Mirza. It now appeared that confirmation in the post of Prime Minister had to be secured in Peking. Like his predecessor, Suhrawardy also announced his decision to go to Peking in October 1956.

It was during this period that a nationalist upsurge was sweeping over the Muslim countries in the Middle East following the takeover of the Suez Canal Company on July 26, 1956, by President Nasser of the UAR. The UAR action instilled a new spirit in the hearts of millions still groaning under the colonial and imperialist oppression in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. Soviet Union came forward with the offer to give financial assistance for the construction of Aswan Dam following the stoppage of British and American help. Indians too, joined nationalist and anti-colonial and anti-imperialist forces of the world in welcoming Nasser's courageous stand. Pakistanis, who joined their Afro-Asian brethren on this occasion were, however, stabbed in the back by their rulers. The Pakistan Government unwaveringly stood behind the Anglo-French, and Israeli aggressors and supported their invasion of Egypt on October 29, 30 and 31, 1956. Lust for power perhaps compelled Prime Minister Suhrawardy to reverse his earlier stand of giving all possible help to the Arab people on the Suez Canal issue. It became clear once again that Pakistan did not possess the necessary courage to oppose the aggressors with whom the conscience of Pakistani rulers were mortgaged.

The betrayal of the Arab people, however, did not in any way affect the growing Sino-Pak friendship as was evident from the cordial talks which Suhrawardy had in Peking at that time. The Pakistani Prime Minister, forgetting his earlier professions of faith in democracy, unfortunately became a puppet of President Iskander Mirza. Shortly before leaving for Peking, Suhrawardy assured the USA that Pakistan did not even dream of snapping its ties with America and withdrawing from the military pacts. In reply to those idealists who entertained a hope that improvement of relations with China might wean Pakistan away from the USA, Suhrawardy made it clear that Pakistan could ill-afford to sacrifice its close ties with America.

Pakistan cleverly prepared a favourable ground to enjoy the Chinese hospitality in full measure. Through the courtesy of

the BBC in July 1956, it quietly managed a broadcast which emphasised the need for China's entry into the UN. Peking was not found wanting. In the course of a meeting with a group of Pakistani journalists, Premier Chou En-lai said: "China was now convinced that the SEATO was no bar to Sino-Pak friendship." The remark gave an aura to the growing Sino-Pak cordiality that had seldom matured in such an unequal relationship. Suhrawardy arrived in Peking on October 18, 1956, marking the beginning of a new phase in Pak-China honeymoon. Suhrawardy declared in the course of his 12-day stay in China: "I see this country wants friendship with every other country. It wants to go out to assure every country that it means well.... If China seeks the friendship of the world, it is the duty of the world to seek the friendship of China."⁸

The Chinese Premier reciprocated Suhrawardy's sentiments and stated that in spite of the fact that Pakistan was a member of the SEATO, there was no reason why China could not be friendly with Pakistan.⁹

The joint communique issued at the conclusion of the visit not only bestowed on Pakistan once again the title of "promoter of peace" but also emphatically declared that the two countries were equally eager to defend each other's interests. The communique stated that the two Prime Ministers had gained further understanding of their respective problems and were prepared to do their best, on the basis of peace and justice, to facilitate their settlement.¹⁰

In an editorial on the outcome of the Pakistani Prime Minister's visit, the semi-official Dawn did not hesitate to comment that the exchange of views between the head of a Communist Government and the head of a Government of an Islamic Republic and chalking out a common strategy was a new example to be followed by many. The result, it said, was a testimony to the fact that ideological differences "do not constitute a bar to the promotion of friendship...."

It was, therefore, not surprising that Suhrawardy, after his

⁸ *Dawn*, October, 21, 1956.

⁹ *Ibid*, October 24, 1956.

¹⁰ *Asian Recorder*, 1956.

12-day stay in Peking when the Suez crisis was at its height, stated categorically: "Let me tell you that I refuse to be isolated.... My main objective is to make more and more friends and not loose our ties..."¹¹ This was in reply to the strong criticism of his Government's apathy towards to the Arab countries. The *raison d'être* of Pakistan's close relations with China, as the country's rulers often haughtily claimed, was Pindi's national interest, and security.

But the hoax of its nationalism was fully exposed when the Pakistan Government extended unqualified support to the imperialist attempts to reimpose colonial slavery on the Arab people. All talk of Muslim brotherhood lost its importance. The rulers diligently toed the American line of action without the slightest hesitation. To stem the tide of popular upsurge in Pakistan in favour of the Arab people, the Pakistani rulers resorted to the old tactics of India-baiting, on the pretext that President Nasser was backed by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Nasser too became the target of venomous attacks by Pindi's trusted proteges.

Dawn, wrote on December 1, 1956:

It will be seen that Nasser's hatred for Pakistan and love for Bharat and its Nehru is an attitude of mind not warranted by facts but conditioned by insensate bias and blind prejudice. It is nevertheless a matter of deep regret that in the vein of this turbulent egotist not the blood of Islam should seem to flow but the turbid water of the Nile. Nasser will never be our friend....

"Interestingly John Foster Dulles said at a meeting of the American National Defence Council, "I hate Gamal Abdel Nasser. I do not believe that he can ever be our friend any day...."

It has always been the practice of the Pakistani rulers to accuse anybody, who does not agree with its viewpoint as anti-Islamic. Nasser never wanted the friendship of Pakistan at the cost of his people's aspirations and national interests of the country. The foreign policy of Pakistan, on the other hand, was the least nationalist; it was pro-imperialist and worked

¹¹*Dawn*, November 15, 1956

while, China was preparing for a headlong clash with the international socialist community for assuming leadership of the Third World countries in the name of preserving the ideological purity. At the Moscow Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties, in 1957, Mao Tse-tung and his followers stubbornly fought for the acceptance of their line of unleashing a nuclear war in order to "completely destroy imperialism."

In Pakistan there was also clamour for anti-American actions. Strangely enough, even arch pro-imperialist forces joined hands with the democratic forces in demanding neutral foreign policy. In autumn 1957, mass demonstrations against American military and air bases in Gilgit were held in Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Sialkot, and other places. The people were, however, not swayed by this sudden outbreak of anti-imperialist fulminations. *Pakistan Times*, analysing this mass protest, wrote :

The anti-American utterances of many Right-wing leaders were largely due to their political bias which was closely connected with the antagonism between the USA and Great Britain fighting for predominance in Pakistan. Often the purposes of such speeches were to gain personal popularity and to improve one's political standing. But certain politicians undoubtedly had the growing anti-American sentiment in Pakistan in view when they made anti-American statements.¹²

Thus a clear demarcation was made between the genuinely anti-imperialist forces, on the one hand, and the pseudo-revolutionary forces, on the other. Maulana Bhasani and others who had left the Awami League and formed the National Awami Party were certainly in the forefront of the anti-imperialist struggle. They coordinated this struggle with the movement for civil liberties inside the country. General Iskander Mirza, who often used to indulge in phoney talk of "controlled" or "restricted democracy" for an underdeveloped country like Pakistan, launched frenzied attack on the people to break the backbone of the democratic movement. He had violated all norms of democratic rule and was clinging to power with

¹²*The Pakistan Times*, October 7, 1958.

the help of the army. General Mirza would go down in the history of Pakistan for his diabolical misrule. A military bureaucrat, with no political or social background, he had only contempt for democratic norms and principles. President Mirza's authoritarian rule complicated the internal political situation so much that party representatives often indulged in physical assaults on each other. During one of such fist-fights, the Deputy Speaker of East Bengal Assembly was seriously injured and died inside the Assembly chamber. Surprisingly enough, there was no official enquiry into this incident. Pakistan's political life had reached the brink of a precipice.

Suhrawardy, too, was isolated in his own country. Due to his Government's pro-US policy, Pakistan's stature was reduced to that of a lackey of America in the eyes of the Arab countries supporting Nasser. The Pakistan Government completely sided with the USA and supported the proposal of "Canal User's Association." The Prime Minister tried to justify his Government's policy of supporting the British, French and Israeli aggression in West Asia. He invented a new theory to explain his Government's partnership in the CENTO and SEATO which compelled Pakistan to betray the cause of the Arab countries. He propounded the theory that real power of the newly liberated countries like Pakistan was equal to zero, and if they were joined by similar countries there would be no change since a few more zeros would also add up to nothing. He asserted that unless the zero was preceded by another digit, it had no value. Here the digit was the military pact with the USA, which made Pakistan a strong country.

The people were, however, not impressed by his mathematical equations. The clamour for an independent foreign policy grew fiercer. President Mirza, panicked by the popular mood, in a special message to President Eisenhower, extended his full approval to the US intervention in the liberation struggles of Lebanon and Jordan.¹² The Iraqi revolution on July 14, 1958, was denounced by *Dawn*. The paper unashamedly cried for military intervention by other members of the Baghdad Pact against "the agents of a Russian-backed dictatorship." The point to be noted here is that Pakistan, in all its pro-

¹²The US Department of State Bulletin, Washington, August 4, 1958.

imperialist military pacts and foreign policies received China's tacit and sometimes active support.

The people of Pakistan were, however, never reconciled to their Government's policy and noted with consternation, China's support to the regime. When Iskander Mirza visited France in November 1957, the people were prompt to point out that the President was enjoying the hospitality of those who were then butchering the Algerian people. *Pakistan Times* wrote on October 31, 1957:

When President Mirza wields a French gun standing shoulder to shoulder with President of France, let him remember that French guns are not used merely to shoot pheasants, that Frenchmen also use their guns to slaughter Algerian men and women—a people whom the people of Pakistan regard as brothers, with whose struggle for freedom we have the deepest and sincerest sympathy.

October 1957, marked the beginning of a period of quick changes of Prime Ministers and their Governments, which actually paved the way for the imposition of a full-scale military dictatorship in Pakistan a year hence. The Suhrawardy Government had fallen and Chundrigar took over as the Prime Minister. Two months later he too met the fate of his predecessor. A feudal Punjabi landlord, Feroz Khan Noon, was sworn in as the Prime Minister. He, too, could not hold on to the coveted post for long and was discarded by President Mirza. All these developments were attributable to the concentration of power in the hands of President Mirza, who initiated a virtual personal rule in the country with the direct US support.

During this period in China also, internecine squabbles between the Maoists and their opponents assumed serious proportions. Following the April 1956 thought of Mao Tse-tung, "Let Thousand Flowers Bloom," the non-Communist forces in China were on the rampage eliminating Mao's adversaries. This process continued for quite some time until Mao Tse-tung was able to fully consolidate his own position in the CPC. The ideological struggle culminated in the break with the international communist movement at the 1960 Moscow Conference.

Political situation in Pakistan reached the point of no return.

The US and other monopolists were reluctant to invest their capital in Pakistan in view of the uncertain political climate. With the deterioration of economic condition, workers and peasants were in revolt demanding minimum facilities for their livelihood. The workers were forced to spend as much as 75 per cent of their earnings on food alone, resulting in an increase in the cost of living index by an average of 7 per cent between January and February 1958. In 1958, the cost of living rose steeply varying from 0.9 per cent to 8.2 per cent in different towns of Pakistan.¹⁴

Even in the less politically articulate West Pakistani provinces, workers and teachers of colleges and schools staged demonstrations defying police bullets and bayonets. In May and June 1958, workers of the foreign oil companies went on strike. Portraying the picture of the prevailing situation, *Pakistan Times* wrote on March 22, 1958:

Feudal lords and their retainers, old bureaucrats and their satellites, business sharks and soldiers of fortune, men who have never lost days' rest or a night's sleep in the cause of freedom, democracy or people's rights, have little use for rights and conventions and institutions won after centuries of suffering and struggle. They are only interested in the benefit which the trappings and stage-properties of democracy may help them to grab.... All this provides an argument against democracy and people's rights to those who would prefer to have even the trappings and stage properties out of the way....

It was quite clear that such a state of affairs was not to the liking of the Americans who had already developed large stakes in Pakistan. The USA pressurised Iskander Mirza for a change in the administration. The Army Chief, General Ayub Khan, was found to be the most suitable man to defend the US interests in the prevailing political situation. Ayub Khan took over power from General Mirza in a bloodless coup and abrogated the 1956 Constitution by a midnight proclamation on October 7, 1958, to become the Chief Martial Law Adminis-

¹⁴*Financial Times*, London, May 11, 1958.

trator. He cancelled the election ordered earlier for November 1958. It may not be out of place to mention here that the Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the Twenty-First Party Congress clearly stated that the military coup in Pakistan was indicative of the fact that "an attack is developing against the democratic gains of peoples who have won national independence."¹⁵

This brief narration of the facts leading to Ayub Khan's coup and the involvement of the CIA in it, in my view, is necessary because it was during the ten year long Ayub regime that Sino-Pak friendship reached a new stage, influencing directly the course of events in Pakistan and the subcontinent. It is in this respect that the role of the CIA in Pakistan is to be examined which is now an established fact. The involvement of CIA is not only borne out by the assertion of Sardar Bahadur Khan (Ayub Khan's own brother) in the National Assembly in 1962, but could also be discerned from the jubilation in Washington over Ayub's coup. The *New York Times*, in an editorial commented rather frankly that there was no reason to doubt the sincerity of Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan in establishing, in due course, a fine, honest and democratic government.¹⁶ The same paper informed that during the night of October 7-8, 1958, President Mirza summoned the Ambassadors of the USA and a few other countries and assured them that Pakistan, a member of the CENTO and SEATO, "would honour her foreign commitments in spite of the political changes at home."¹⁷ It would be, therefore, in this background, interesting to follow the way China cultivated Ayub to achieve its objectives.

¹⁵*Pravda*, January 28, 1959.

¹⁶*New York Times*, October 12, 1958.

¹⁷*Ibid.* October 10, 1958.

CHAPTER SIX

Role of an Honest Broker

WHILE ON THE domestic front President Ayub Khan came down with a heavy hand on the forces of progress and democracy, at the international level he had decided to pursue a policy based on the premise that "there are no eternal enemies and no eternal friends."

Peking's action in Tibet, in 1951 provoked anti-Chinese reaction in Pindi. China was naturally disturbed by these, but carefully avoided any adverse official remark against the Ayub regime. China directed its non-official and semi-official organisations like the Chinese Journalists' Association, to make a critical appraisal of Pakistan Government's foreign policies. Nevertheless, the tone of the appraisal, as one Pakistani expert noted, "was restricted and mild as compared with the acerbity of Soviet or Indian invectives against Pakistan."¹

It is interesting to note here that at the height of the Tibetan crisis and in the midst of sharp cleavage between China and India on border issues, General Ayub Khan proposed "joint defence" with India to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. But the Indian Prime Minister refused to fall in Ayub's trap hatched in Washington. Nehru left Ayub dumbfounded by posing the knotty question, "*Joint defence against whom?*"

¹L. A. Sherwani, etc. *Foreign Policy of Pakistan, An Analysis*, pp. 74-96.

There were serious apprehensions in political circles that Ayub's intriguing offer was a grand strategy jointly drawn up by Pindi and Washington with the full knowledge of Peking. While by this offer Ayub Khan expected to undermine India's non-aligned foreign policy, Peking wanted to put an end to it by forcing New Delhi to climb on the Pak-US bandwagon. Nehru correctly assessed that it was a clever ruse to create a crack in the Indo-Soviet friendship. Nehru made it clear that such an alliance with Pakistan would be repugnant to the basic principles of India's policy of non-alignment.³

During these turbulent days when Ayub Khan extended unequivocal support to the US action in Laos, China moved very cautiously. Peking signed Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Pakistan towards the end of 1959. The relations between the two countries showed signs of further improvement following the appointment of the new Chinese ambassador, Ting Kyo-yin, to Pakistan in December 1959. Peking's appreciation of Pindi's policies was reflected in full measure during the U-2 incident.

In sharp contrast with other countries' violent protests, Peking maintained unabashed cordial posture towards Pakistan. It made sure that the brunt of its broadsides was not faced by Pakistan. China directed its criticism deliberately against the US Government alone. It lodged no official protest with the Government of Pakistan unlike other countries, including India and the Soviet Union.

The year 1961 was marked by rapid changes in foreign policies of both China and Pakistan. Peking was stepping up its project of mobilising support in favour of its own thesis. Pakistan, following the scathing attack from Soviet Union and India on the U-2 incident was dexterously trying to consolidate its understanding with Washington and Peking.

The news of the liberation of Goa by the Indian army from Portuguese occupation was also the cause of displeasure in Pindi. There were also reports of Pakistan's assistance to Salazar's autocratic government for crushing the Goa liberation struggle. These reports gained a measure of currency by Pakistan's reaction to the Indian action. Pindi held the view

³*The Hindu*, November, 1959.

that India had grabbed Goa by brute force, spurning the advice of both the US President and the British Prime Minister. There were also weighty reasons to assume Peking's concern over it. For Peking might have feared that Portugal's ouster from Goa would force Salazar to direct his attention to Macao outpost bordering China. This would have threatened not only China's security but also seriously damaged the flourishing smuggling business fetching a handsome amount of foreign exchange for China.

In such a situation it was logical for Peking to lean more heavily on its old friends—Pakistan and the USA. Ayub Khan took upon himself to act as the broker of Peking to net new allies in the Afro-Asian world. He undertook a mission to project China's peace-loving image among the neighbouring countries other than India. The Pakistani President, during his visit to London in 1961, aired his views quite frankly in the hope that it might fall on some receptive ears. Ayub Khan, stated that he foresaw that both in the present circumstances and in future they (Afro-Asian nations) "would seek protection from China, and China would be willing to give it." His profound vision, however, failed to yield any encouraging result because at that time Pakistan's reputation in the Afro-Asian world was at a very low ebb. President Ayub's exhortations raised doubts and suspicions, instead.

In 1961, Pakistan was faced with an acute political and economic crisis. Ayub Khan's indirect election by "Basic Democrats" and by the manoeuvres of his loyal bureaucracy failed to satisfy, even marginally, the popular aspirations. Thousands of political workers were still behind the bars and people's protesting voices were silenced by bullets and bayonets. The business elite which had always been one of the main protectors of Pakistani regime were demanding more concessions from the Ayub government. Their thriving business could not acquire the many dimensional character. As the Ayub dictatorship made Pakistan completely dependent on American assistance and supply of raw materials, the indigenous business monopoly, though an offspring of the US monopoly capital, became more restive and asked for still greater concessions.

Pakistan had few basic industries and majority of small and

medium industrial establishments were owned by an opulent minority of businessmen. This compradore section of the bourgeoisie was not fully satisfied with the Ayub regime's export-import policies. The industrialists wanted to explore the possibilities of new markets for their products as the existing arrangement under pacts with the USA and the CENTO and SEATO partners lost their initial charm. It was due to this reason mainly that some of the prominent members of the group of 22 families (like M.A.H. Ispahani) became ardent admirers of China. They showed extraordinary zeal to prove China's potentiality as a solid trading partner of Pakistan. They even made fervent pleas for curbing the growth of monopoly in the country in order to prove their *bona fides* and present themselves as "progressive" businessmen in the eyes of the Chinese. A top brass in the Pakistani business community, M. A. Rangoonwala, even admitted that cartels and trusts did exist in Pakistan. This clamour for anti-monopoly drive was as much to deceive the people, as it was intended to win favour from the Chinese. Under this facade of progressive outlook, the business community proceeded cleverly to bring China and the USA closer. It was an open secret that the sympathy of the industrial-bureaucratic elite in Pakistan was always with the Americans. This tribe's suddenly becoming vocal for closer cooperation with China raised justified doubts in public mind. The people were in a quandary to understand clearly how the same people who stifled the voice of democracy in Pakistan could win the confidence of the Chinese rulers.

Ispahani was welcomed in China in 1960. The stigma on him as one of the criminal exploiters of the workers and peasants in Pakistan did not unripple the Peking leaders. (Ispahani was a leading member of the group of 22 families which controlled 60 per cent of the nation's industries, 79 per cent of the insurance companies and 50 per cent of the banking industries). Ispahani, who was formerly the country's envoy to Britain, had been a consistent supporter of China. As early as 1954, during his term as the country's High Commissioner, in London, he expressed the view that China's representation in the UN was one of the essential conditions for ensuring world peace. In his book, *27 Days in China*, he forcefully argued for still closer relations with China. He, however, laid

more emphasis on improving trade relations with China, which he described as not only Pakistan's great Asian neighbour but also a potential world power.

Ispahani was not alone in his mission and was able to draw on influential men like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto for the success of his endeavour. Bhutto, then Minister for Commerce and Scientific Research, was an advocate of the interests of both America and China. A feudal landlord from Larkana in Sind, Bhutto learnt his trade in the U.S.A and was the most volatile personality during the days of Ayub Khan. He bravely weathered the unfavourable political climate to carry forward Ayub's dictatorial policies. His joining with Ispahani, however, prompted the obdurate President to pay heed to the wise counsels of his more loyal juniors and he decided to take the plunge into Chinese arms. President Ayub was swayed by the fervour of friendship with China, brewed in the committed pro-USA circles in Rawalpindi. The immediate effect was the reversal of Pakistan's policy in regard to China's entry into UN. Pakistan supported the draft USSR resolution in the UN General Assembly for seating China in December 1961. This reversal, it may be pointed out, was made after closely examining the prospects of the approaching Sino-Soviet rupture.

The drift in the Sino-Indian relationship was also a contributory factor in the USA-Pak reassessment of their China policy. China was in utter disagreement with the majority view that peaceful transition to socialism is attainable. Ridiculing the theory, the Chinese paper, *Red Flag*, characterised it as a "sheer nonsense and pure deception." China was already chagrined by the Soviet disapproval of the Sino-Indian border clashes in 1959. Keeping in view all these favourable trends developing rapidly towards the direction of a complete rift, Pakistan made some quick readjustments in its policy. The USA, on the other hand, following the election of Kennedy to power, was more shrewd in its policy of enticing China. While it adopted a friendly posture towards India offering more help, it gave full encouragement to Pakistan to mend its fences with China. The US policy was intended to serve the dual purpose of provoking China by giving help to India and forcing New Delhi to discard Soviet friendship in order to get arms from America to defend the country against the Chinese.

understanding."

This evaluation makes it transparent that Pakistan was neither unaware nor reticent over the Sino-Soviet differences and its possible repercussions. Pakistan knew quite well what role Peking and Washington expected it to play to safeguard their interests. Pakistani press also interpreted the Soviet aid to India as "a Russian attempt to make India a bulwark against the rise of China." It was done with a definite motive to incite China against the Soviet Union and India.

The new policy, however, became a useful instrument in the hands of the discredited Ayub regime. The policy was effectively used in the first session of the National Assembly after Ayub's farcical election. The election held on the basis of "Basic Democracy" formula, made a mockery of democracy. A handful of Basic Democrats elected Ayub Khan as the President as most of the political leaders languishing in prison, were disqualified to contest election under the draconian rule known as Elective Bodies (Disqualification) Order (EBDO). Many prominent public figures were falsely implicated in corruption charges and debarred from contesting elections. The order was in force till 1968.

The first session of the National Assembly was held in June 1962 in the midst of a simmering revolt of the people in defiance of several punitive measures adopted by the military dictatorship. A full-scale debate on the country's foreign policy exposed the utter failure of the Government to pursue a nationalist foreign policy. Members from the Opposition benches took the floor one after another and blasted the Government's hoax. Ayub Khan's own brother, Sardar Bahadur Khan spearheading the attack on the Government's foreign policy of a complete sell-out to the USA stated: "The American interests in Pakistan were selfish and guided by their strategic interests. The aid they give us is given to achieve their ends and not for our good," he declared.² The same paper reporting on the National Assembly proceedings wrote: "A hushed house heard Sardar Bahadur Khan disclosing startling details of a concentration camp being run in Quetta and prisoners being hung by their feet half-naked." Other members speaking after him

²*Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, June 29, 1962.*

charged the Government of following an anti-Islamic foreign policy alienating the country from the Muslim world. "The most tragic thing was that a Muslim country also opposed the cause of Pakistan," one of the members bemoaned. Abdus Sultan, another prominent member said ruefully:

We have failed to create interest for Pakistan in the Muslim world. They (the Muslim countries) have no sympathy for us but Nehru is hailed there as the messenger of peace.... In fact we have not profited in the least by the SEATO and the CENTO and Pakistan today enjoyed little respect in the outside world....¹

It was this which helped Foreign Minister Mohammed Ali to successfully play trump card of soft policy towards China to blunt the edge of the Opposition's crusade. The Ayub regime thus repeated its performance of effectively using Chinese friendship as a powerful weapon for throttling the voice of justice, and democracy in Pakistan. The harrowing picture of hitherto unheard of brutalities of Ayub's police thugs was a clear evidence of the fact how the Chinese friendship was made use of to hoodwink the world. Pakistan, in Bahadur Khan's words, was not governed by a popular or representative government. "A ruthless minority presides over our destiny," he lamented. Many popular public figures openly stated that the Ayub administration did not guarantee any of the basic rights of a citizen of a free country. In other words, Pakistan was still not a free country even after 15 years of independence. One gets the same impression about Pakistan from the following speech of a Pakistani leader.

Individual citizen's right to liberty, security of his property, his right to his own opinion and his right of expression, his right to profess his religion, his right to follow his profession and trade are all not protected from being interfered with by laws whether made by the executive or legislature under Ayub constitution.²

¹*Dawn*, June 28, 1962.

²Hamidul Huq Choudhury, Former Foreign Minister of Pakistan, *Pakistan Observer*, August 6, 1962.

The regime singled out the Communists for physical extermination. Ayub's Information Minister gave the call to free the press from the Communists. The progressive paper, *Pakistan Times* (formerly owned by Mian Ifikharuddin), which was taken over by the military administration, in an editorial under the title, "Norms of Patriotism," exhorted the Pakistanis to start a witch-hunt for the members of the banned Communist Party. The editorial warned the people not to be complacent about the weakness of the underground Communist Party. "As for the smallness of their number," the paper pointed out, "by creed they are a minority. Lenin proudly named his faction Bolsheviks, the minority...." The people were sermonised for "eradicating this land of its enemies. Of them all, *Communists* are the bitterest."⁴

By a joint communique on May 3, 1962, Pakistan and China announced the agreement for starting negotiations on the demarcation of border between Sinkiang and "the contiguous areas, the defence of which is under the control of Pakistan." This, they asserted, was necessary for ensuring peace in the region and developing good relations between China and Pakistan. The two countries, as per the agreement, held negotiations in Peking in mid-October 1962. Many articles appeared during this period in Pakistani and Chinese press describing the border negotiations as a manifestation of warm friendship between the two countries. It may be pointed out that political discontent in Pakistan by this time had assumed serious proportions with the killing of several students in a demonstration on September 17, 1962, on the occasion of Martyrs' Day in East Bengal. With these developments in the background when China launched aggression on India on October 20, 1962, Pakistan quite logically extended full support to Peking. Most of the Pakistani press relied exclusively on Chinese sources for their reports on the Sino-Indian fighting.

The Chinese attacked India on the charge that it had become a stooge of US imperialism and, therefore, forfeited the right of Chinese friendship. The real motive behind China's attack was its new ideological formulations and compulsions which regarded armed clashes essential for "igniting the flame

⁴*Pakistan Times*, August 19, 1962.

of world-wide revolution." The Chinese contention that attack on India was to destroy its pro-imperialist policy, was totally baseless if one looks at Sino-Pak flirtations at the time. If China was sincere in its anti-imperialist crusade, Pakistan should have been the first object of Chinese wrath as it was a bastion of US imperialism. China not only aided and abetted Pakistan's aggressive policy towards India but also gave it a clean chit as a "peace-loving nation." The real intention of the Chinese aggression was to sabotage Indo-Soviet friendship. China's wrath fell on the Soviet Union because it could not agree with the latter's peaceful attitude towards the sub-continent as also criticism of Chinese hostility towards India.

China continued holding its divergent opinion on the thesis of the 1960 Moscow Conference of 81 parties. It disagreed with the majority view that socialist countries must adopt cooperative attitude towards national democracies like India. While it was suggested that the socialist camp should give comprehensive economic aid to strengthen national economies it was made clear that they would oppose any anti-democratic action of the national governments. China vehemently objected on the ground that it would dampen the revolutionary spirit of the people finally obstructing the growth of communism. China was in sharp disagreement with the Soviet policy that Peking's line of giving a "push" to revolutionary movements in young national states of Asia and Africa would actually undermine the position of the progressive forces and weaken the friendship between newly independent states and the socialist camp.

But the irony of the Chinese policy was that Peking flirted with Ayub Khan's autocratic regime in Pakistan and denounced the Indian Government as "reactionary nationalist." China did not ponder over its characterisation whether Ayub Government really fit into the category of "progressive nationalist." China conveniently ignored the stark reality that the Ayub regime was a bitter enemy of all the democratic elements in Pakistan. Persecution of the Communists in Pakistan was as cruel as in any other fascist, anti-democratic country. The paradox of the evaluation was clearly motivated by the requirements of power-politics. The dominating factor in the Chinese aggression against India was its dogmatist line; cooperation

with pro-imperialist and anti-democratic Pakistan was a matter of expediency.

By now fully aware of the Chinese strategy, Pakistan adopted a somewhat indifferent attitude in contrast with its earlier public stand. Both USA and Pakistan, as a number of foreign affairs experts have pointed out, were serious about the "expansionist danger" of communism. But, Pakistan had no apprehension that China's advance would ultimately pose any serious threat to Pakistan's security. This conviction on the part of Pakistan also makes it clear that Pindi had prior knowledge of Chinese designs in India and its direction. The Chinese attack was as much helpful to Pakistan as it was for Washington. It was due to these calculations and prior knowledge that both USA and Pakistan did not appear to be concerned or upset over the Chinese aggression against India. Without the tacit US support or its direct complicity, Pakistan would have not dared to declare in the emergency session of its National Assembly that the conflict was not more than a border warfare and would be "restricted to the area under dispute." Apprehensive of the uncritical US reaction, the Pakistani Foreign Minister told the National Assembly that the conflagration stemmed from India's "unrealistic and fallacious foreign policy." "Had India sincerely based its policies on the principles of peace and good neighbourly relations," the Foreign Minister asserted, "the present conflict would have been averted." This contention could not but be based upon the White House strategists' assumptions. The student of war and strategy, as President Ayub, was fond of calling himself, gave his expert opinion to the National Assembly on November 21, 1962: "China's aim would be limited because of the difficult terrain, the unkind weather and the difficult lines of communication. China had no design on the Indo-Gangetic plains."

It was, therefore, clear that there was no clash of opinion between China and Pakistan that Peking's action was not intended to be total conquest of India but force her to face a military debacle under the joint Sino-Pak pressure on the border. It was also in conformity with the Chinese global strategy to force as many Afro-Asian countries as possible to follow or

acquiesce in China's adventurist lines. Pakistan's lending support to China proved that the USA was keen on upsetting the balance of power in Asia. The US interest lay in the fact that India which prized Soviet economic assistance for the development of her economy and was doggedly pursuing its peaceful policy of non-alignment, would be compelled to rush to the American doors begging for help. It was also this understanding that raised the clamour in the Rightist camp that India should jump on the US bandwagon for defence against the Chinese aggression.

Pakistan with its clear idea of the Sino-US interests in the conflict, indulged in caustic comments against India. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto declared in the National Assembly that Pakistan had no enmity whatsoever with China which was, in fact, a great friend. "It would be a folly on the part of anyone to think that Pakistan would go to India's help in its fight with China."¹ Another comment of Bhutto on the Sino-Indian war was clear enunciation of the identical US-Pak position. Re-iterating Pakistan's support to US stand against the liberation of Goa, Bhutto said in the National Assembly on December 4, 1962 that the People's Republic of China "is no pimple on the face of India as was little Goa. It is a colossus. It is a vast indestructible country of 650 million united in a common cause and with common ideals for the sake of which they would willingly lay down their lives."

Pakistan in its own way saw in the Chinese aggression an opportunity of seeing India's disintegration and had hoped that China would not end the war in a huff before ensuring complete success of its purpose. China's ceasefire declaration disappointed Pakistan beyond recovery. Bhutto lamented in the National Assembly, "We could not, for instance, anticipate the unilateral declaration of ceasefire by the People's Republic of China..."²

By this aggression, however, China could guess clearly how loud would be Pakistani shouting in its favour and to what level of dishonesty Pindi rulers would stoop to defend Peking's ostentatious peace-loving image. Prime Minister Nehru

¹*Pakistan Times*, November 9, 1962.

²*National Assembly Debates*, 1962.

in a brilliant exposition of the Sino-Pak duplicity said once :

The fact that in the history of the world you will find very few examples of such deceit and duplicity as Pakistan has shown in siding with China in the dispute between India and China....It is an action singularly lacking in principles and can only be described as blackmail.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Blood-Stained Handshake

THE TWO COUNTRIES after passing through successfully the test of friendship took the first step towards further cementing their by relationship signing a border agreement on March 2, 1963. Bhutto won the prize post of Foreign Minister. Known for his garrulity, Bhutto characterised friendship with China as "a fundamental principle of Pakistan's foreign policy," even when he was only a Foreign Secretary in the Government.¹ Bhutto thus proved to be the most appropriate person to go to Peking to sign the border agreement with China.

Pakistan arbitrarily signed away, according to the Prime Minister Nehru's statement in the Lok Sabha on March 5, 1963, 3,000 square miles of Indian territory to China. There are, however, conflicting opinions over the issue whether Pakistan had any administrative control over the area given away to China. The border agreement was, however, politically motivated to undermine India's prestige abroad and project it as a "villain of peace." The jubilation in the West justified the apprehension that the imperialists had sinister motives in encouraging Sino-Pak border agreement to deliberately undermine India's policy of peace and friendship. While the London *Times* viewed it as "an equitable compromise," *The New York Times* editorially commented that the agreement "represents

¹*The Times*, November 27, 1962.

about as equitable compromise as could have been achieved."² The fact that the real intention behind the border agreement was to throw mud at India can be seen from the observation of the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan. At the time of announcement of starting the negotiations on the Sino-Pak border demarcation in 1961, he said in Rawalpindi, that the question was "a minor affair.... There is no dispute and there are peaceful contacts between the two countries on this matter."³ It is thus seen that the two countries with a subtle understanding with Pakistan's Western allies concluded the border agreement in a remarkable haste. The running thread in the understanding between them was the denunciation of India's alleged policy of hostility towards its neighbours. As was evident from Bhutto's speech in the UN General Assembly, the main objective of the Sino-Pak border agreement was to neutralise India's friends.

Pakistan wanted to impress upon the Western countries as well as India's friends that it was India's bellicosity that was mainly responsible for the continuation of the Sino-Indian differences. It needed to justify also the Sino-Pak border agreement as a peaceful settlement between the neighbouring states which India was allegedly opposing. Very few were, however, taken in by Bhutto's verbal jugglery. But failure did not demoralise either Pakistan or China. Pakistan found in this agreement an opportunity to claim international recognition, at least *de facto*, of its otherwise illegal occupation of Kashmir, whereas China, having secured its pound of flesh at India's cost, bound Pakistan more tightly to its apron strings.

The border agreement became an effective weapon in the hands of China and Pakistan to cry hoarse against stubborn refusal by India to give up her legitimate claims over her own territory. Pakistan continued to pursue its policy of blackmail against India. It indulged in deliberate lies. India's attempts to strengthen its defence after the Chinese aggression of 1962, was presented as a prelude to an attack on Pakistan. Bhutto said that the augmentation of India's military strength "has a menacing significance, not for Pakistan only but for

²*The Times*, March 4, 1963, *The New York Times*, March 4, 1963.

³*Dawn*, Karachi, December 8, 1961.

the whole region stretching from Hindukush mountains to Mekong river."⁴

In the same speech Bhutto inadvertently admitted that during the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict, Pakistan "resisted the natural temptation of taking advantage of helplessness of India." As a price for this "sacrifice," Bhutto staked his claim on Kashmir. In his desperation, Bhutto blurted out that the only way in which India can demonstrate to the world that "Pakistan does really have some secret understanding with the People's Republic of China is by agreeing to an honourable and equitable settlement over Kashmir." Bhutto had indirectly admitted that there was really some concrete understanding with China which would be effectively used to bully India. Peking too had sufficient reasons to have this sort of arrangement with Pakistan for the services rendered by the latter in defending China's shattered image at the imperialist gatherings of CENTO and SEATO.

At the CENTO and SEATO meetings in early 1963, Bhutto declared unequivocally, "China had no designs to invade India." Bhutto's sincere service found warm appreciation in Peking. During an address to a meeting of the Afro-Asian journalists in Peking on May 17, 1963, Chou En-lai expressed gratitude for the "bold stand taken by Pakistan at CENTO and SEATO." The Chinese Premier also declared that Peking had a "better understanding of Pakistan's association with these alliances (CENTO and SEATO)." Chou En-lai even went to the extent of offering China's good offices for explaining Pakistan's position vis-a-vis its alliance with the West to Peking's allies.⁵

Two pro-Government Pakistani dailies also reported Chou En-lai's deep appreciation of Pakistan's defence of China in CENTO and SEATO, particularly to "disabuse the minds of the Western military allies of any suggestion about China having committed aggression against India."⁶ While this showed to what extent China was anxious to win the sympathies of the West, Peking by defending Pakistan's military

⁴Bhutto's Speech at Hyderabad (Sind) on April 26, 1962.

⁵L. A. Sherwani, etc. *Foreign Policy of Pakistan, An Analysis*, pp. 74-96.

⁶*Pakistan Times*, June 18, 1963, *Evening News*, May 30, 1963.

pacts wanted to give the impression that there was no dearth of goodwill for Pakistan in China despite Pindi's close links with the Western powers. Chou En-lai justified Pakistan's CENTO and SEATO alliances saying that "it was a matter of necessity and security against India's aggressive designs."⁷ There was thus complete unanimity between China and Pakistan on the indispensability of the military pacts for Pakistan.

In view of this mutual accord and appreciation of each other's objectives, the existence of a military pact between the two countries seemed to be more plausible. Bhutto declared in the National Assembly on July 17, 1963 that an attack on Pakistan by India would involve the "largest state in Asia," meaning China. He had thus thrown a broad hint at the nature of understanding with China. He said in his speech:

An attack from India on Pakistan is no longer confined to the security and territorial integrity of Pakistan. An attack by India on Pakistan involves the territorial integrity and security of the largest state in Asia, and, therefore, this new element and this new factor brought in the situation a very important element and very important factor. I would not at this stage like to elucidate any further on this matter, but suffice to say that the national interest of another State itself is involved in an attack on Pakistan.... Therefore, a subjugated Pakistan or a defeated Pakistan is not only something which is inimical to the people of Pakistan.... It also poses a serious threat to other countries in Asia and particularly to the largest State in Asia.⁸

While this speech of Bhutto was broadly in line with his statement in Hyderabad referred to earlier, the Foreign Minister, according to Pakistani press reports, admitted in October 1963, that although there was no Sino-Pak military agreement, there is a strong assumption that the two countries would join hands to "outdo any possible Indian mischief."⁹

The next important event of the year was the Air Transport Agreement between Pakistan International Airlines and the

⁷*Pakistan Times* (Dacca), June 2, 1963.

⁸National Assembly Debates, 1963.

⁹*Morning News*, October 9, 1963.

Chinese Airways signed on August 29, 1963. The Managing Director of PIA, Air Commander Nur Khan, went to Peking late in May 1963 on the insistence of China to come to such an agreement. The idea was originally mooted in 1956. The agreement was a significant step forward in the Sino-Pak relations. Besides, the fact that the PIA had the distinction to be the first non-Communist airlines to have a foothold in China, Peking used this airlink as a contacting channel with Pakistan's allies in the West, particularly, the USA. There were also reports that the PIA flights were used by the CIA to smuggle spies in the guise of "academics" into Peking.¹⁰

Sino-Pak relations started developing smoothly and there was a commonness of approach between the countries in regard to important international issues and in matters of mutual interests Pakistan was so much in harmony with Peking that it not only supported China's stand on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty but also egged on its controlled press to unleash a bitter campaign against the Soviet Union. While *Dacca Times* expressed the view that the effect of the Moscow Treaty, signed on August 5, 1963 was "doubtful," a Bengalee daily, *Azad*, in order to please the Chinese, commented that the Soviet Union has already joined hands with the Western imperialists. But the hypocrisy of the Pakistani rulers was exposed soon when President Ayub Khan hailed the first nuclear test by China as "most impressive achievement of the Chinese Government and the Chinese people."¹¹

The most important event of the year was, however, the visit of the popular peasant leader, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, to China in November 1963. The trip was not only an important landmark in the history of Sino-Pak friendship, but it was crucially significant also for the democratic and anti-dictatorship movement in Pakistan.

Maulana Bhasani with considerable following among the poor peasants in East Bengal, who incidentally constituted an overwhelming majority of the Pakistani population, always enjoyed a special attention from the bureaucracy. The rulers trained

¹⁰Tariq Ali, *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?* Jonathan Cape Ltd., London, 1970. p. 132.

¹¹*Dawn*, December 16, 1964.

over years in the art of political intrigues cherished Bhasani's desertion to their camp. Bhasani's acceptance of the offer to lead a delegation on behalf of President Ayub Khan was considered by them as a major victory over the people opposing the bureaucracy and dictatorship. People were reasonably aggrieved and took it as a stab in their back. A personality like Bhasani was an asset to the popular forces and its loss was naturally an immense gain for their oppressors. It would, however, be wrong to assume that the people were against Bhasani's going to China. What they detested was Bhasani's compliance with Ayub Khan's request to go to China on his behalf as a leader of an official delegation. There is no dispute over the fact that people of Pakistan, particularly of East Bengal, were thoroughly disgusted with the Ayub regime. They had only hatred for the West Pakistani rulers.

The people were poor, their rights and liberties restricted; they were not free citizens in their homeland. A West Pakistani paper, *Civil and Military Gazette* describing the situation then prevailing, stated that the resources are getting concentrated into a few hands with greater speed than their development.

At a time when the tide of anti-dictatorship upsurge was in full swing, the act of desertion by a man of Bhasani's stature could only be regarded by the people as a shameless betrayal of the popular movement. That the people were justified in their indignation at Bhasani's conduct was proved by the subsequent events.

Bhasani, during his sojourn in China proved through his speeches and talks with the Chinese leaders that he was a loyal representative of President Ayub Khan. The Peking leaders, including Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai, with whom Bhasani had long confabulations, were impressed by his shrewdness, simplicity of manners and, above all, the deep sense of sincerity to the task he was assigned. This realisation of the Chinese leaders encouraged them to have serious business talks with the trusted and tried representative of Ayub Khan. At the talks, which later decided the fate of anti-Ayub stir in Pakistan, were present Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai. Premier Chou told Bhasani clearly that the "Chinese would welcome a rapprochement between the National Awami Party and the Ayub regime." (It may be pointed out that since the Communist

Party was banned in Pakistan, many Communists functioned through NAP). Maulana Bhasani, according to General Raza, the Pakistani ambassador, agreed to carry out the wishes of the Chinese leaders. Maulana Bhasani's tape-recorded interview with Tariq Ali (June 1969) gives a broad picture of the nature of talks held between him and Mao Tse-tung.

"When you went to China, what did Mao discuss with you when you met him?", asked Tariq Ali.

"Mao said to me that at the present time China's relationship with Pakistan was extremely fragile and that the United States, Russia and India would do their utmost to break this relationship. He said, you are our friend, and if at the present moment you continue your struggle against the Ayub Government it will strengthen only the hands of Russia, America and India. It is against our principles to interfere with your work, but we would advise you to proceed slowly and carefully. Give us a chance to deepen our friendship with your government...."¹²

Mao Tse-tung's advice, not request, makes it abundantly clear what China wanted to achieve through friendship with Pakistan, at the cost of democratic and progressive movements in Pakistan. The prime factor was opposition to Russia and India which Mao thought was hindering success of China's hegemonistic goals. United States was deliberately mentioned along with the Soviet Union and India, in order to save Bhasani from embarrassment and justify his alignment with the Ayub regime. The fact that President Ayub Khan was inextricably linked with the USA, was more clearly known to Mao Tse-tung than to anybody else. Anger against the USA was, therefore, not genuine and meant only for propaganda purposes. What service Bhasani was expected to render to further Sino-Pak friendship was clear from his views expressed in the course of an interview which appeared in a Pakistani paper shortly after his return.

Bhasani observed that the new rising Pakistani bourgeoisie "is bound to come into conflict with the American and Euro-

¹²Tariq Ali, *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?* Jonathan Cape Ltd., London, 1970.

pean bourgeoisie." He was hopeful that the leading industrialists who controlled Pakistan's economy would become trade partners of the socialist countries, resulting in an end to the Western stranglehold on the country's economy. "This is the direction in which we are moving and I will be damned if I condemned Ayub Khan for this opening to the Left," Bhasani pointed out.¹³

These views of Bhasani only confirm the role played by the Pakistani bourgeoisie in improving the Sino-Pak friendship. A link-up between the anti-people forces in Pakistan and the US monopolists along with the Maoists is also discernible in this game of power politics. This chain, though often threatened with collapse due to the pressure of popular movements never got disjointed. In fact, whenever there was a popular upheaval, there were renewed efforts so that this link got strengthened and became more effective.

The understanding reached between Mao Tse-tung and Bhasani on behalf of President Ayub Khan had clearly influenced the subsequent events. In an interview to *Washington Post*, President Ayub Khan said on September 12, 1963 that if Pakistan was attacked by India to "further its expansionist aims, we assume that other Asiatic powers, especially China, would take notice of that." While these views were expressed on the basis of definite Chinese assurances, it was aimed at playing up India's alleged aggressive posture towards its neighbours, especially China and Pakistan, with whom New Delhi was not on good terms. This was also in quite conformity with the views expressed by Foreign Minister Bhutto that "the motive force in her alliance was to counteract India's assiduous and planned tactics to isolate Pakistan in order to finally strangle her."¹⁴

Pakistan thus devised its ways right into the Chinese camp on the pretext of India's attempt to isolate Pindi. Obviously, the same was the argument of Mao Tse-tung for justifying his nefarious tactics of making Asians fight Asians in order to ultimately facilitate US machinations in Asia and Africa.

¹³*Outlook*, Karachi, April 15, 1964, referred to by Tariq Ali in his book, p. 141.

¹⁴*The Times*, November 28, 1962.

China played up the differences between India and Pakistan by encouraging Pindi's India-baiting. In December 1963, the Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Trade during his visit to Pakistan declared that "if ever there is a war between India and Pakistan, China will surely support Pakistan and not India." This meant that China did not rule out the possibility of an Indo-Pak war soon. This pledge was also not totally unexpected in view of the similar assurances by Pakistan to China during the 1962 conflict.

Pakistan's outcry against India's non-alignment policy and friendship with the Soviet Union was also becoming increasingly raucous with the rapid growth of friendship with Peking. Soviet economic assistance to India was not appreciated either in Peking or in the capitals of Pakistan and the USA due to obvious reasons that it infused a new spirit into India to achieve economic progress and to pursue its non-aligned foreign policy. The intention of breaking the unity of the Afro-Asian nations pursuing non-aligned foreign policy became gradually clear with the activities of Peking, Pindi and Washington.

President Ayub started playing the game of USA and China. Giving his views on the issue of non-alignment, the Pakistani President said in Colombo on December 12, 1963 that "non-alignment is a shadow of major powers conflicts." He also stated that Pakistan would not join the non-aligned world to be called "a sychophant of major powers."¹⁵ President Ayub's reference to major powers was directed clearly towards the Soviet Union which has been a consistent supporter of non-alignment. By his description of the followers of non-alignment as "sychophants," President Ayub wanted to incite them and undermine their prestige as merely "camp-followers of the Soviet Union." Such a statement was naturally relished in Peking and Washington. By this comment President Ayub assured the USA that Pakistan would never be a party to the mission of non-alignment. It suited China's policy also which was then trying to draw under its spell the Asian and African nations by luring them with the promise of rescuing them from the domination of "economically developed white giants"—the imperialist America and revisionist Soviet

¹⁵*Hindustan Times*, December 16, 1963.

Union. President Ayub was, therefore, only advancing the Chinese cause to effect an unbridgeable division among the newly liberated Afro-Asian nations which were being supported by the Soviet Union in various ways. Opposition to the USA was meant not so much as a crusade against imperialism as it was for inciting headlong clashes between the Afro-Asian nations. For, weakening of the unity of Afro-Asian nations benefited the USA more than anybody else and about which both China and Pakistan were conscious due to their active cooperation with the US game.

The period following the visit of the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai in February 1964 witnessed significant developments in the Sino-Pak relations having a direct bearing on situation prevailing in the subcontinent. Pakistan was supporting China in every possible way taking its message to Afro-Asian countries where Peking's stock was very low. Pakistan's renewed love for China earned for it valuable Peking support on the Kashmir issue which had been the corner-stone of Pakistan's policy of alignment with the West as well as with China.

The arrival of Chou En-lai accompanied by Foreign Minister Marshal Chen Yi at a crucial juncture, when Ayub Khan's anti-people policies incurred only popular anger against the rulers, served the purpose of the ruling class only. This was indeed an inexplicable characteristic of the Chinese friendship for the Ayub regime. Chou En-lai's reiteration of the Chinese approval of Pakistan's membership in the CENTO and SEATO pacts as "defensive" and common cause of the Chinese and Pakistani people under Ayub Khan's able leadership for "promoting Afro-Asian solidarity and defending world peace," constituted indirect advice to the anti-Ayub forces to give up their just struggle.¹⁶

Chou En-lai's glib talk of the fast rate of economic progress of Pakistan under Ayub's rule raised serious doubts in people's minds about the sincerity and wisdom of the Chinese Premier.¹⁷ High praise by Chou En-lai of the Ayub regime for its persistent efforts in projecting China as a peace-loving nation, left the people with a big question: *why was the prestige of*

¹⁶Dawn, February 19, 1964.

¹⁷Ibid., February 24, 1964.

the valiant Chinese people taken to such a low level by the Maoists and refurbished with the help of a US ally like Pakistan?

Chou En-lai declared :

The Pakistan Government and public opinion have righteously refuted the slanders made by the forces hostile to China and pointed out that China is a peace-loving country. This constitutes a valuable support to China for which the Chinese government and the people would like to express sincere gratitude.¹⁸

While the Pakistani people had nothing against the Chinese people, they resented the Peking leaders' encomiums for the Ayub government. The people also could not give assent to President Ayub's statement at the banquet given in honour of Chou En-lai at Rawalpindi on February 26, 1964. President Ayub Khan did not certainly enjoy the confidence of the majority of his countrymen and, therefore, had no right to speak as their representative. While people were aware of the game Ayub Khan wanted to play in collaboration with the USA and also by making use of the Chinese friendship, they justifiably questioned the wisdom of Peking leaders' hobnobbing with Pindi rulers.

The Chinese leaders were more interested in the usefulness of the Pindi outfit to achieve their ends rather than the cause of the struggling Pakistani people. That also was behind Chou En-lai's indulgence in irresponsible talks that the people of Pakistan were progressing economically under the able and wise guidance of Ayub Khan and that the Pakistani President was a consistent fighter for defending national independence and sovereignty against foreign interference.¹⁹ These remarks were made on the soil of Pakistan where the rulers surpassed even their colonial masters' record of exploitation with the active cooperation of the USA and Britain. (While the total Central revenue in the budget for 1964 was around Rs 297.37 crores, foreign aid for economic projects, excluding military and PL-480 aid, amounted to Rs. 287.68 crores. Till September

¹⁸ *Dawn*, February 25, 1964.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

1965, the US military aid to Pakistan amounted from 1500 to 1700 million dollars).

Concern for the success of China's nationalistic aims actually prevented the Peking leaders from being reserved and reasonable in their characterisation of the Pakistani economy. Making a common cause with the Pindi rulers was the overriding consideration of Peking. Marshal Chen Yi remarked in his reply to Bhutto's speech at a dinner party, given in the honour of the Chinese guests:

The Chinese people will stand shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistani people and the peoples of Asia on the vast fertile and newly emerging continent of ours and strive to create a bright future for ourselves.²⁰

Marshal Chen Yi also reminded Pakistani leaders that both China and Pakistan had a "great stake in Asia."²¹

The people of Pakistan were thus drawn against their wishes into a common front with their oppressor, Ayub Khan, and the opportunist Chinese Government. Most disgraceful and assailable to the people was the Chinese leaders' conduct in seeking the help of Ayub to open dialogue with the USA. President Ayub disclosed later that when Chou En-lai visited Pakistan, "half of my talks with Chou were on relations with the USA."²² This was not only confirmed later by Bhutto's speech in the National Assembly on August 21, 1964, but also by a report in the *Washington Post* during this period. The report stated that President Ayub "had set himself up as an honest broker who would be glad to work for a rapprochement between USA and China."

The people of Pakistan were also deeply disappointed at the reluctance of the Chinese leaders, to even casually mention the struggle of the Vietnamese people against the imperialist aggression. This omission was considered as a betrayal of the Vietnamese struggle for freedom. The people of Pakistan noted with indignation how China was preoccupied in the game of narrow power politics to gain hegemony over

²⁰*Ibid.*, February 24, 1964.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Morning News*, Dacca, July 14, 1964.

Afro-Asian nations. The Chinese leaders preferred to remain silent on the Vietnam issue in the fear that it might cause embarrassment to the Ayub regime. It was clear to the Chinese leaders that Pakistan was a staunch follower of the USA which masterminded the diabolical operations in Vietnam. They also felt that Pakistan might develop cold feet over its commitment to support the Chinese proposal for a second Afro-Asian nations' conference. These were the considerations which compelled China to blindly support the Pakistani action against Vietnam struggle at the Afro-Asian ministerial meeting held in Djakarta from April 10 to 14, 1964. China did so for bagging Pakistani support against an Indian proposal for inviting the Soviet Union to the proposed conference.

President Ayub Khan, in his book *Friends Not Masters*, disclosed that a resolution was sponsored by several members condemning the American action in Vietnam. "It was as a result of our intervention that the resolution was dropped," Ayub Khan revealed. It is no wonder that in no joint Sino-Pak communique or statement there was even an indirect mention or reference about the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people.

The most striking success of Ayub Khan was the definite Chinese commitment over Kashmir in favour of Pakistan. The Chinese support was also noteworthy due to the fact that it bared the Chinese hypocrisy. China, disregarding its earlier stand over Kashmir, wholeheartedly supported the Pakistani case. The joint communique declared unambiguously that the leaders of the two countries were of the opinion that "the Kashmir dispute would be resolved in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir" as "pledged to them by India and Pakistan." This statement of China was in sharp contradiction to the stand taken by it earlier. During his previous visit to Pakistan in 1956, the Chinese Premier evaded a firm commitment or answer on the issue by his laconic comment that "We are still in the age of studying the question. There is a principle followed in China that one has no say on a question until he has studied it."²³ This was also in flagrant violation of the unequivocal Chinese assurance to the Indian

²³*Dawn*, December 25, 1956.

ambassador, R.K. Nehru, in Peking on March 14, 1956 that China believed that the people of Kashmir had already expressed their wishes in regard to their future status and on the issue of Kashmir's accession to India.²⁴

It may be further mentioned that, while in 1961, Chou En-lai asked the Secretary-General of India's External Affairs Ministry, "Can you cite any document to show that we have said that Kashmir is not a part of India," his Government cynically repudiated its own stand in a note to India on May 31, 1962, "can you cite any document to show that we have ever said that Kashmir is a part of India?"²⁵

In view of these convenient shifts by the Chinese, an addition of a few lines is necessary here to understand Pakistan's interest in Kashmir. This is required to make a proper assessment of the Indo-Pak conflict which broke out in October 1965 on the issue of Kashmir. The people of Pakistan, too, have been ruthlessly plundered on the pretext of wresting Kashmir from India. Pakistani rulers justified their anti-national foreign policy in the name of winning Kashmir. They whipped up communal passions and unleashed rabid anti-India propaganda on the issue of Kashmir. But the dream to win Kashmir through war proved not only a costly pastime but an adventurist game leading the country to utter chaos and rendering the economy bankrupt.

While China's interest in Kashmir was due to its strategic position and geographical proximity, Pakistani rulers considered it as a thorn in their side. A noted observer of Pakistani scene, Werner Levi observed that the question of Kashmir to Pakistan was the "touchstone by which animosity and friendship are tested." Another expert, Khalid Bin Sayeed, asserted that "the ruling passion in Pakistan's foreign policy, a passion which has influenced its behaviour towards all other countries, has always been the fear of India," in regard to Kashmir. All the experts taking a lenient view of the Government's stand over Kashmir were more or less unanimous in their observation on Kashmir's importance to

²⁴Government of India, White Paper No. VI, 1961. Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

²⁵Link, March 10, 1964.

Pakistani rulers. As there were no dearth of official propagandists, one of them opined that "supreme interest lies in the solution of the problem of Kashmir, for upon that depends not only the political well-being of the people of Pakistan but also the economic prosperity and their defence."²⁶

While this was an indication of the trend of official propaganda to make political capital out of the Kashmir issue, evidences are also available how Pakistani rulers made use of the Chinese friendship to further their interests. A well-reputed Pakistani expert in his evaluation of the Kashmir problem vis-a-vis the importance of Sino-Pak friendship, stated in categorical terms:

So long as the Kashmir dispute simmers, there can be no durable friendship between India and Pakistan and distrust and rivalry will continue to cloud their relations. Pakistan, therefore, cannot afford estrangement with China.

On the contrary, China which is a rival to India for leadership in Asia, would want a friend in Pakistan....It is there foretransparently clear that so long as Sino-Indian rivalries continue...and there seems to be no end to it in the near future...China would be opposed to any Indian attempt at making Pakistan the victim of its aggrandisement. This line of reasoning may have been one of the factors responsible for the remarkable patience and restraint which Peking has shown in its relations with Pakistan over the past few years.²⁷

This brilliant assessment needs no further comments. The popular mood in regard to Kashmir was, however, totally different, free from emotional overtones or deliberate exaggeration of Kashmir's importance for the welfare of the people. They detested the Government's cheap propaganda against India and whipping up of communal frenzy on Kashmir issue. The sign of resentment was particularly discernible among the majority of Pakistani people who lived in East Bengal. Even Suhrawardy got disillusioned and remarked once: "For us, East Pakistanis, neither the Kashmir problem is important nor the canal

²⁶K. Sarwar Hasan, *Strategic Interests of Pakistan*.

²⁷Qutubuddin Ahmed, *Foreign Policy of Pakistan, An Analysis*. pp. 74-96.

water dispute. We do not have even our fundamental rights. First, we demand the right of provincial autonomy, then Kashmir and the canal water."²⁸

Ataur Rahman Khan, a former Chief Minister of East Bengal, once told some correspondents: "Burning question for us is how to get independence for this country (East Bengal). We have no stake in Kashmir which West Pakistanis want for building their own playground, where hardly any one of us can afford to go even once in our lifetime." The people of East Bengal maintained that the talk about defending the rights of the Kashmiri Muslims was merely an excuse. In fact, West Pakistani rulers wanted to keep the Kashmir issue burning for their own benefit. They pointed out that if the Ayub regime was so much concerned about Muslims in Kashmir, why should it continue its membership in the CENTO which was basically anti-Muslim? The most important factor responsible for the Bengali disinterest in Kashmir was the exploitation of their resources for maintaining a big armed force and purchasing sophisticated weapons from abroad. They pertinently questioned the utility of sacrificing their bread in the interest of the country's military forces, 95 per cent of which were constituted by the people of West Pakistan. More than 70 per cent of the funds allocated for defence came from East Bengal.

The visit of Chou En-lai, however, evoked favourable response in the West. China's unequalled hypocrisy was considered by *London Times* as a "striking success" for the Pakistani President. The Chinese Premier's departure after his exciting tour, left Pakistan to take up the unfinished tasks. Bhutto with a renewed vigour, undertook another hook-up mission to Afro-Asian countries for the benefit of the Chinese mandarins. Wrongly assuming some of the Afro-Asian countries as prospective customers, Bhutto in a tone of connoisseur aired his views that China was not an "ogre getting ready to swallow South-East Asia but a benevolent giant." He, however, failed to impress any one to take a plunge into the not-so-inviting Chinese net. Bhutto, therefore, turned to Pakistan's old master, the USA.

²⁸*Las-o-Nahar*, Lahore, November 10, 1967.

The Pakistan's Foreign Minister, once again, clamoured for making the Sino-US contacts public. Bhutto openly advocated the need for starting serious dialogue between China and the USA. In a major policy statement, the Foreign Minister stated in the National Assembly on August 21, 1964:

Nothing will give us greater satisfaction than to see the eventual, I would not call it a settlement, but a recognition of the realities of the situation as between United States and China. A breakthrough in the difficult, though somewhat artificial, situation between those two great powers is urgently called for. If it could come, that would be the most important single factor conducive to international peace and security. In the realisation of this objective, Pakistan will be ready to play whatever modest role it can. We are not saying this in a spirit of presumption. We know that world conditions require that at a certain stage there must be some relaxation in the tension between the United States and China. The present situation cannot last for long. . . .

We hope that slowly the reason of negotiations and accommodation will bring themselves to bear upon and lead to an important China-United States relations. I repeat, we will be willing to undertake whatever limited role we can play in this matter.²⁹

This speech is a clear revelation of the trends developing in the Sino-US relations. The prospects of a viable Sino-US detente were based on these developments. Bhutto had clear knowledge of this. He was not unaware that China, despite its extravagant talks and tall claims of being the undaunted vanguard of the true revolutionary crusade for the liberation of the downtrodden, had an acute desire for the company of the USA. It was due to this idea that Bhutto described the differences between China and the USA as "artificial." This knowledge also helped Bhutto to prove his "excellent skill" in the evaluation of political matters of international significance, such as Sino-US detente. China, contrary to its ideological adherence to the defence of national liberation struggles of all nations, doggedly refused to engage itself in an armed conflict

²⁹National Assembly Debates, 1964.

with the USA even at the height of the Vietnam war in 1964, though China was a violent "crusader" for world war to bring about a world revolution. Peking made it absolutely clear that it would intervene in Vietnam only if China's security was threatened by the US war in Vietnam.

A high-level Chinese official, who preferred to remain anonymous, in an interview with Dr. Hugo Portisch, the publisher of *Der Kurier*, stated :

We would feel threatened only if, perhaps, the United States would round up their special warfare forces towards the north; if they attacked North Vietnam.... This would directly endanger the stability of our border and of the neighbouring provinces. In such a case we would intervene.²⁰

What the Chinese official meant by this guarded statement was that Peking would not get unduly panicky by the limited US action in Vietnam, leaving free the northern borders of Vietnam adjacent to the Chinese territory. When the USA provoked the Tonkin Gulf incident on August 5, 1964, China did not do anything beyond sharply denouncing the action. The clearest reaction of the Chinese, however, came in January 1965. Edgar Snow, who was then in Peking after his meeting with Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai, got the impression that the Chinese leaders were not contemplating any step that might entail a conflict between the China and USA. This understanding led Edgar Snow to draw the conclusion that "only if the United States attacked China would the Chinese fight."

It was in this light that Bhutto waxed eloquent about the Sino-US detente in the National Assembly. It is, however, a fact that he had been one of the consistent champions of both China and the USA, and in most of his pronouncements he expressed in equal proportion his love for China and passion for America.

The Sino-Pak collaboration in the meantime scored another major success by helping Ayub Khan to get elected as the President for a second term. The election held in January 1965 owed a great deal to the service extended by Chairman

²⁰Harold C. Hinton, *Communist China in World Politics*, Boston, 1966.

Mao's undaunted follower, Maulana Bhasani. For the first time during the election, Bhasani demonstrated clearly his loyalty and sincerity to the pledge given to Mao Tse-tung during his visit to Peking in 1963. While hatred and indignation against Ayub Khan's rule had forced the opposition parties to sink their differences and form a Combined Opposition Party (COP) to put up a joint candidate against Ayub Khan, Maulana Bhasani chose to plough his lonely furrow. The COP chose Miss Fatima Jinnah, sister of Mohammed Ali Jinnah, a non-party personality, as their Presidential candidate against Ayub Khan. While the election campaign was in full swing, Bhasani withdrew from electioneering, feigning illness. A close associate of Bhasani during that period told the author: "We are by now accustomed to such kind of political illness of Maulana Bhasani." He also informed that Bhasani after his return from Peking, became a champion of the Ayub regime on the plea that it was friendly towards China. Another prominent leader from Bangladesh, Begum Motia Chowdhury, said in an interview with the author that Maulana Bhasani, in spite of his prestige among the peasants, was really an enigmatic personality to many Bengalis because of his many questionable conducts at most crucial hours. "His shrewdness is really unfathomable," she remarked. There were also several such reports in the Pakistani press indicating that Bhasani instructed his close followers among the Basic Democrats to vote and campaign for Ayub Khan. Some of the Pakistani scholars, not so sympathetic to the anti-Ayub forces, have attributed Miss Jinnah's failure to Bhasani's non-cooperation.

Khalid Bin Sayeed, in his book *The Political System of Pakistan*, wrote :

Maulana Bhasani, leader of the National Awami Party, who had considerable influence in the Rajshahi Division, did not campaign actively for Miss Jinnah, probably because he did not want to upset Ayub's foreign policy which was veering steadily towards increasing friendship with China.

President Ayub Khan, however, won only by a narrow margin despite intimidation of the Basic Democrats and friendly gestures of personalities like Bhasani. He also spent several

crores of rupees to bribe the Basic Democrats. Ayub Khan was so nervous that he even issued open threats to his opponents. He declared: "If Opposition forces win in Pakistan, there would be a second revolution and the 'opportunist' politicians will be taught a lesson by the military." This was a clear indication of Ayub Khan's intention in case he got defeated in the election.

Thus, when Ayub Khan ultimately won the election, one of the first foreign governments to greet him was China. Chou En-lai congratulating Ayub Khan on behalf of the Chinese Government stated, that Ayub Khan's success showed quite clearly that he had the support of the people. Maulana Bhasani's letting down of the popular forces in this context did not seem to be a gross mistake. Maulana Bhasani had only fulfilled the wishes of his mentors in Peking.

The fake election victory of Ayub Khan, however, needed a fresh reappraisal of Sino-Pak relations and Ayub Khan was invited to Peking to receive a hero's welcome. President Ayub Khan after making a mockery of democracy and consolidating his own position at home, arrived in Peking on a state visit in March 1963. This was also the time when millions of valiant Vietnamese fighters were laying down their lives on the red soil of their homeland so that Johnson's hordes must not pass. While it was known to the world that Pakistan was one of the staunchest supporters of the USA on the issue of Vietnam, *People's Daily*, welcoming Ayub Khan's visit to China, described Sino-Pak relations as a "model of a new type of relations between states." Chou En-lai expressed his gratitude that the Chinese people would ever remain thankful to Ayub Khan for his efforts in improving the Sino-Pak friendship. President Ayub, too, assured that Pakistan would strive its utmost for closest relations with China.³¹ The joint communique issued at the end of President Ayub's visit conveniently refrained from condemning the US aggression in Vietnam which was then the most agonising issue concerning world attention.

The reason for this ominous silence by these countries on Vietnam issue became clear soon. The two countries were

³¹ *Dawn* March 3, 1963.

then straining their nerves to bring about a viable Sino-US entente which could have been easily hindered by criticising America on Vietnam issue. This was clear not only from Peking's non-cooperation with other socialist countries to set up a joint front to help Vietnamese in their struggle, but also from Pakistan's full-throated support to the denunciation of Ho Chi Minh's Government as an aggressor against South Vietnam, through a communique issued by the SEATO Council meeting held in London in May 1961. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bhutto, who signed this communique on behalf of Pakistan, disclosed later that Ayub Khan had issued strict instructions to the Pakistani press not to write a word in regard to the Vietnam war that might offend the USA and its allies engaged in the war.

The direction in which the Sino-Pak relations were heading became clear after a significant speech of Foreign Minister Bhutto in May 1965. In an address to the Foreign Press Association in London on May 6, 1965, the Foreign Minister dilating on the Sino-Pak relations explained that China had a special role in cementing the relations between different Afro-Asian countries. He, however, made it clear that such a unity and solidarity is "not directed against the Western powers or their interests." "Its fulfilment lies in collaboration with the West and the rest of the world," Bhutto observed.²²

In other words what Bhutto wanted to convey was actually the wishes of China which desired to build up a "third bloc" under its leadership against the majority in the socialist camp, with the newly liberated Afro-Asian countries following them. While the Maoists tried to give the impression that this Chinese-led front would be both against Soviet 'revisionists' and American imperialists, Bhutto made it clear that the new bloc would operate in close collaboration with the West. Bhutto's elucidation seems to be nearer the truth because he was acting as the mediator between China and its targets. His advocacy of the Sino-US flirtation also exposes the hollowness of the Chinese insinuation against America.

"If there is to be a real understanding, a real detente bet-

²²Z.A. Bhutto, *The Quest for Peace*, The Pakistan Institute of International Affairs.

²³*Ibid.*

ween the East and West, China must be a party to any arrangement for it," Bhutto emphasised.²²

Bhutto's pleadings were also clear reflections of China's policy as was evident from Chou En-lai's statement on June 2, 1965 that "strengthening of friendship and cooperation between China and Pakistan is a positive factor in the present international situation." Chou En-lai knew full well that Sino-Pak friendship was a prerequisite for Sino-US understanding.

The policy thus pursued by the Ayub Government gave a clear indication of a meaningful understanding between China, Pakistan and the USA. The broad framework of Pakistan's foreign policy accommodated, to the greatest extent, the basic interests of these three countries and *vice versa*. Both the Pentagon and White House officials like Robert McNamara and George Ball were carefully explaining that Pakistan's special relationship with China was not harmful from the American point of view. Correctness of this assessment is also evident from the evaluation of Ayub's foreign policy by one of the authoritative spokesmen and pedlars of Ayub Khan's strategy, Z.A. Suleri, who till recently continued to show his loyalty to the establishment as the Editor of *Pakistan Times*. In his book *Politicians and Ayub*, published in mid-sixties, Suleri analysed the salient features of Ayub Khan's foreign policy.

Referring to friendship with China, Suleri remarked that it is "not merely an advantage in itself, it has also paved the way for better relations with Soviet Union. The Sino-Soviet conflict will only make the Kremlin more sensible to the Pakistani viewpoint," he pointed out. Turning to the USA, Suleri confidently illustrated, "However reluctant it might appear, even Washington will begin to value Pakistan's links with China. *That the United States should have approached President for talks with China on Laos and South Vietnam is a fact pregnant with developments of far-reaching significance.*" (Italics mine)

Pakistan's growing intimacy with China was, however, under constant vigil of the USA. The Pindi strategists, too, never for a moment, forgot their original loyalty to Washington. Whenever there was the slightest sign of worry in Washington, Pakistan rushed with the assurance that it had moved closer to China not at the cost of the USA. "We have moved forward in our relations with China but we have not moved

backward in our relations with the United States," Bhutto repeatedly assured.

It was during this period that Bhutto was desperately trying to sell the Chinese wares under Pakistani label to the USA and other gullibles in the Afro-Asian world. The Pakistani troops, already excited by Peking-fed arms and ammunition, started pouncing upon the Indian soldiers in the Rann of Kutch in April-May 1965. Peking made fool of itself by denouncing India for allegedly "carrying out the US schemes of making Asians fight Asians" at a moment when the Chinese broker, Bhutto, was passing his sleepless nights in agony to bring the USA and Chinese leaders together at a conference table. Peking was forced to criticise India because it was being allegedly backed by the Soviet Union. It is, of course, true that the Soviet Union appealed to both India and Pakistan to settle their disputes through peaceful means and direct negotiations. When further hostilities broke out on the Kashmir borders in August-September 1965, Soviet Union reiterated its earlier appeal to stop immediately the bloodbath and suggested to both India and Pakistan to return to the path of negotiations.

Soviet Premier Kosygin in a similar message to Ayub Khan and Lal Bahadur Shastri pointed out: "In the present grim situation, the main emphasis should not be placed on the question of the cause of the conflict or of ascertaining who is right and who is wrong. The main efforts should be concentrated... on halting the tanks and silencing the guns."¹⁴ The Soviet Union also foiled Bhutto's attempt in the Security Council to raise the Kashmir issue, and insisted on a cease-fire.

China was naturally irked by these activities of the Soviet Union. Chinese acerbity against the Soviet Union grew fiercer since the fiasco of its own policy in 1962 when it tried to achieve its objective by armed conflict. The Chinese Foreign Minister Marshal Chen Yi came to Pakistan at this hour of Pakistan's need. After consoling it for the initial setbacks, Marshal Chen Yi joined with Pakistan in branding India as the aggressor and declared that China would give all support and help to the "just action taken by Pakistan to repel the Indian armed provocation in Kashmir." The Chinese Foreign

¹⁴Pyada, September 12, 1965.

Minister endorsed once again Pakistan's stand in regard to Kashmir and stated categorically that China had all sympathy for the "freedom fighters" in Kashmir, who were struggling to "liberate Kashmir from the tyrannical Indian domination."²⁵

But it would be wrong to assume that the Chinese sympathy was limited to the mere expression of sympathy and extending moral support. There was a surfeit of arms and strong unequivocal political support too. The Chinese government in an official note on September 16, 1965, categorically warned:

So long as the Indian Government persists in its unbridled aggression against Pakistan, China will not cease supporting Pakistan in her just struggle against aggression. This stand of ours will never change, however many helpers you may have, such as the United States, the modern revisionist and the USA-controlled United Nations.

Along with the warning, China started concentrating troops on the India-Sikkim borders. These areas were close to Assam and NEFA borders. There were widespread condemnation in Soviet Union of the Chinese activities. Soviet Party Chief, Brezhnev, described the Chinese actions as adding "fuel to the fire."

China was, however, not deterred by the tragic consequences of the war on the people of Pakistan and India as well. The people of both the countries against whom China should have had no enmity were unfortunate victims of the war with crushing economic burden on them. Peking leaders' activities showed that they were apparently oblivious of the people's hardships in order to achieve their objectives. China was also not satisfied with encouraging Pakistan alone, it even went to the extent of enticing the USA to intervene in favour of Pakistan. Bhutto informed the National Assembly that, "India dared not raise its little finger against East Pakistan. I cannot say any more. One day all will be known."²⁶

There were some definite clues to a Sino-Pak-US deep-seated conspiracy during the 1965 war in regard to East Bengal. Pindi rulers were greatly disturbed by the growing rebellion of the

²⁵*Dawn*, September 5, 1965.

²⁶*Ibid.*, March 16, 1966.

Bengalis. The war, too, failed to rouse their sentiment for Kashmir. West Pakistani warlords were shocked at the obstinacy of the Bengalis in refusing to join the rabid anti-India tirade launched by the rightists and religious fanatics. Bhasani became one of the leading figures of the anti-India campaign unleashed by the pseudo Islam-loving forces. It was customary for the rulers to raise a hue and cry about Islam being in danger whenever they found the situation too tough for them. These internal developments were not unknown to China and Peking as a genuine friend of Ayub Khan took charge of East Bengal. Bhutto's revelation in the National Assembly pointedly hinted at such an arrangement between China, Pakistan and the USA. There are also some reports to confirm this.

Bhutto, in an interview in August 1969, told Tariq Ali that the Chinese made it clear to the United States in Warsaw that Peking would not "sit back and see East Pakistan occupied." It may be recalled that China and the USA were holding talks in Warsaw at the time of Indo-Pak hostilities. Referring to this meeting, a *New York Times* report also said that the "defence of East Pakistan was the subject-matter of discussion between the USA and the Chinese representatives..." Confirming this report Bhutto said that China sent a message to India through the US ambassador asking New Delhi to stay out of East Bengal.

Interestingly enough, a Bengali book published from Dacca after the 1965 conflict, entitled *Amader Mukti Sangram* (Our Liberation Struggle), in a startling disclosure stated that there was a Sino-Pak conspiracy to hand over East Bengal to Peking. The book written by one Kamaluddin Ahmed was subsequently banned by the Ayub regime. The author observed that Ayub Khan was convinced that East Bengal could not be kept under West Pakistani heel for long and, therefore, made a secret deal with Peking to leave it to China's care. Ahmed, in support of his contention, stated that China could not penetrate so deeply into the political life in any South Asian country as it was able to do in East Bengal with Ayub's connivance. Arrangements were also made in broadcast over Dacca Radio political developments in China and propagation of the Chinese language. The controlled press was instructed to

publish copious extracts from the Chinese papers and innumerable articles and essays were written on China. Though Marxist-Leninist literature was banned in Pakistan, China was allowed to distribute thousands of *Red Books* containing Mao's Thoughts through its several cultural centres and libraries in East Bengal. Ahmed stated that *Chinese consumer goods glutted the East Bengal markets* and the trade with China was increasing with such a tempo that China had to establish their own colonies in various localities of East Bengal. In the name of restructuring and revitalising the defence, the Chinese were allowed to collect valuable data about secret military bases in East Bengal, Ahmed disclosed.

The author revealed further that President Ayub's strategy was to provoke a war jointly with China against India. Ayub Khan's calculation, according to Ahmed, was that in such an eventuality, India would be forced to weaken its defence on the Kashmir sector and concentrate its troops for repelling Chinese attack on the eastern border. While this would considerably weaken Indian forces, Pakistan, taking advantage of the Chinese pressure in the Ladakh sector, would be able to occupy the Kashmir Valley with ease. This joint attack would also compel India to turn towards the USA and Britain for help which would automatically pressurise New Delhi to give up its claim on Kashmir. While victory over Kashmir would be an immeasurable gain to China, Pakistan and the USA, Peking would be able to annex Assam, Nagaland, NEFA, Mizo Hills area and Tripura from India. This plan, Ahmed observed, completely suited China's "Asiatic strategy" to create another Vietnam in the Indian subcontinent. It may be pointed out that the Awami League official organ, *Ittefaq*, while welcoming the Tashkent Declaration, clearly hinted at such a possibility.

These revelations also make it clear why China and the Western powers were not happy over the Tashkent Declaration ending the Indo-Pak military conflict. There was a barrage of attack against the Soviet Union under whose auspices and because of whose active cooperation the Tashkent Declaration was signed on January 10, 1966, between the Indian Prime Minister and the Pakistani President.

It is no strange coincidence that China, along with the USA and Britain, bitterly criticised the Tashkent Declaration.

While the *London Times* described it as being "far from no-war declaration," Royal Institute of International Affairs in an article called it a "negative achievement." The *Peking People's Daily*, too, described the pact as a "service to imperialism." The quintessence of the criticisms was denigration of Moscow and New Delhi.

The majority of the Pakistanis living in East Bengal, however, heaved a sigh of relief at the stoppage of war and heartily welcomed the Tashkent Declaration. The reason behind their wholehearted support was that they were fed up with the anti-India propaganda running on communal lines and economic burden becoming unbearable for them. East Bengal was completely cut off from West Pakistan as there were no mail services. All import-export trade between the two wings stopped. There was a chronic shortage of coal and kerosene during the war. Train services were also dislocated for shortage of coal and the Bengali houses remained completely dark due to lack of kerosene. (Electricity supply in East Pakistan was too inadequate as compared to West Pakistan). In the midst of this, the news of Tashkent Declaration was naturally received with relief and joy.

Welcoming the Tashkent agreement, Awami League mouth-piece *Ittefaq* wrote :

Communist China could not welcome the Tashkent pact for obvious reasons. She had castigated it as a conspiracy jointly hatched by the Soviet Union and the United States. But we consider Tashkent Declaration as not only a positive step towards improving Indo-Pak relations, but also a meaningful attempt for restoring peace in this subcontinent. We cannot agree with those who believe that Pakistan was left untouched by India because of the threat from China. We do not expect that East Bengal should be taken care of by any super power as it has happened in Vietnam.

The people of East Bengal were deadly opposed to Sino-US machinations in East Bengal. They favoured friendship with the Indian people which was deliberately not allowed by the rulers of Pakistan to safeguard their own interests. Hailing the Tashkent Declaration as a guarantee for peace and

friendship between the peoples of India and Pakistan, a progressive daily from Dacca, *Sangbad*, wrote on January 10, 1967 on the occasion of its first anniversary :

The historic Tashkent Declaration signed on 10 January last year is a priceless treasure of 600 million people. The Tashkent Declaration has presented us with a solid foundation, a great ideal and correct directive to build a happy, prosperous, peaceful and democratic future and also to restore friendly relations between the two peoples of this sub-continent.... The greatest achievements of the Tashkent Declaration are rejection of principle of war and use of force as the means to settle inter-state disputes, acceptance of the principle of peaceful negotiations and indispensability of Indo-Pak friendship.

The Maoists in Pakistan, especially Bhasani's blind followers, were, however, loyal as ever to the Chinese and campaigned virulently against the Tashkent Declaration. They regarded the war as a "people's war" and favoured its continuation. Maulana Bhasani joined hands with Jamaat-e-Islami zealots and rabid anti-Indian forces, and toured extensively all over Pakistan to run down the declaration as a surrender to India and the Soviet Union. Immediately after the ceasefire, Bhasani rushed to Rawalpindi and had long confabulations with President Ayub at Nathiagali. The undaunted crusader against the military rule, Maulana Bhasani received, in the perfect style of a general, a guard of honour by Ayub Khan's militarymen after his talks with the President.

Maulana Bhasani also split the National Awami Party after he failed to force his partymen to condemn the Tashkent Declaration and call the Indo-Pak war as a "people's war." Bhasani clamoured for war against India and his supporters even went to the extent of stating in the party organ *Janata*, that there were only two anti-imperialist voices in Pakistan—those of Ayub and Bhasani. This paper once described Mao Tse-tung as the "foremost revolutionary organiser, initiator of fundamental thinking, and a superman of this age." Incidentally, President Ayub Khan revered the Chinese leaders in a similar manner. The Pakistani delegate at the Afro-Asian

Solidarity Congress held at Moshi (Tanzania) in 1963, stated that "Field Marshal Ayub Khan considers Chou En-lai to be the greatest living Marxist." Maulana Bhasani once again gave proof of his loyalty to the Maoists by splitting the progressive movement and betraying the democratic forces at a crucial juncture when the anti-people forces were making repeated attempts to drive a wedge between them.

Meanwhile, deterioration in the economy due to war and the betrayal of West Pakistanis, serious political agitation broke out all over Pakistan. Movement for autonomy in all the provinces, especially in East Bengal, assumed serious proportions. Chronic food shortage appeared all over the country. Prices of essential commodities shot up beyond the reach of common people. There was a general strike in West Pakistan. It was at this moment that Sheikh Mujibur Rehman announced his historic six-point programme for autonomy of East Bengal in February 1966. The Bengali nationalist sentiment which was at its height due to long years of denial and deprivation, suddenly burst forth in a new fury. The Ayub regime obviously got panicky at the spontaneous response to this programme. The ruling clique immediately dubbed this programme as a "camouflage for secession." On March 20, 1966, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was arrested along with a large number of his followers. The Awami League mouth-piece, *Ittefaq*, was banned; its editor, Tofazzal Husain, was imprisoned and its press was confiscated.

It was at this hour of misfortune of the popular forces that the Chinese President Liu Shao-chi and Marshal Chen Yi came to Rawalpindi to shake hands with Ayub Khan, whose hands were already stained with the blood of his opponents. When the people of Pakistan were united in their common fight against Ayub Khan's fake democracy, protesting against the curtailment of their democratic rights and crying for food and shelter, Marshal Chen Yi declared in a speech in Lahore that Ayub's "basic democracies had something in common with the people's communes." In the same speech he stated with confidence:

Under the leadership of Mohammed Ayub Khan, the Pakistani people, united as one and filled with a common

hatred towards the enemy, triumphed over the enemy... and finally repulsed the aggressor in safeguarding the independence and sovereignty of their country...."²⁷

While this speech did not reflect at all the popular sentiments then prevailing against Ayub Khan, it served as a warning to the anti-government forces as "sahoteurs of unity for progress and defence of country under the leadership of Ayub Khan." The joint communique issued on March 31, 1966, also disapproved of the people's revolt for democracy and autonomy, and extended total support of the Chinese to allow the Kashmiri people to decide their own fate. China still supported the Pakistani clamour for Kashmir as an unresolved dispute and did not rule out the possibility of war to bring about a favourable settlement. This statement of the Chinese and the Pakistani leaders was a clear warning to Sheikh Mujibur Rehman and other democratic elements challenging Ayub Khan to hold a referendum in East Bengal. Sheikh Mujibur Rehman said then in a statement: "Our Government is fighting for a referendum in Kashmir. Let it hold a referendum here (East Bengal) and it will see that more than 80 per cent of the people are behind me."

²⁷*Pakistan Times*, March 30, 1966.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Sino-Pak Relations : the Military and Economic Assistance

THE TRADE AND economic relations between China and Pakistan have not been as deep as their close friendship in the game of power politics. Eagerness to promote trade and economic ties always lacked serious initiative and zeal on the part of policy-makers of both the countries.

This was more so in the case of the Pakistani rulers, who never had any ambition to make the country's rickety economy self-reliant with the help of foreign financial assistance and to boost it through improvement of trade with China, possessing a vast and diversified market. Whatever little headway could be made in the field of trade was taken full advantage of by the opulent minority section of business and industry, which, by virtue of their huge concentrated wealth formed the backbone of the military-bureaucratic ruling outfit in Pakistan and controlled the country's economy.

China, in its trade and economic relations with Pakistan, was guided by the compulsions of power politics. It took little interest in freeing the Pakistani economy from the Western stranglehold. Peking leaders undertook the adventurous course of fulfilling the insatiable desire of the Pindi brigands for arms. Both China and Pakistan had always attached more importance to military preparations than to economic advancement

for the welfare of the people. China had no inhibitions in dealing with the Pakistani leaders as the former was already a successful trade partner of many imperialist and racist powers like the USA, Britain, South Africa, Portugal and West Germany, etc. These connections helped China to shake off whatever little reservation it had to build up trade and economic relations with the militarily aligned Pakistan and a trade partner of many anti-democratic dictatorial regimes like Israel and South Vietnam, to mention a few. In order to maintain its opportunistic entente with Pakistan, China continued supplying military equipment to Pindi. This assistance was regarded as most essential by the Pindi rulers to consolidate their shaky position. They were oblivious of the economic ruination of the country, and strengthened the arsenal at the cost of bread and shelter for millions of Pakistanis. The ruling oligarchy in Pakistan always entertained an irresistible longing for keeping the machines of war well oiled in order to silence the voice of justice.

It is too well known that Pakistan allocated as much as Rs 3,400 million, or 54.3 per cent of the total budget allocation, for defence during 1971-72 as against previous year's Rs 3,000 million or 53.8 per cent. It should also be noted that both Pakistan and China have been equally vociferous in their declaration that the arms were given as gifts to Pakistan.

The history of Sino-Pak trade and economic relationship is as old as the diplomatic relations between the two countries. After Pakistan recognised China in consultation with Britain, it pleaded with its wealthy paramour, United States, to let it have trade relations with Peking. Praying to the USA to permit China's entry into the UN, Pakistan's Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin pleaded before it with a heavy heart that the "blockade would affect many friends of the United States who want to trade with China." The Pakistan's Prime Minister told then in an interview with the UPA correspondent that Pakistan wanted to sell its cotton to China and the US disapproval would "create quite a serious problem" for Pakistan.¹ While the USA, outwardly, maintained a disapproving posture towards the Sino-Pak flirtations, it grudgingly relented and

¹ *Dawn*, February 12, 1953.

acquiesced in promoting trade relations between these two. In 1952, Pakistan's export to China was worth 83.8 million dollars as against import of Chinese goods to the tune of 2.2 million dollars. It is no wonder that Peking showed extreme friendliness towards Pakistan in 1954 and 1955, and almost matched the US gestures to Pindi. These were the years when Pakistan abjectly subjugated itself to the US global strategy, and the Sino-Pak volume of trade showed further signs of improvement.

The value of exports to China in 1953 was 72 million dollars followed by 26.1 million dollars in 1954 and 31.7 million dollars in 1955. Imports from China, however, declined due to the sudden flooding of Pakistani market with American goods. While Pakistan bought goods from China worth 3.3 million dollars in 1953, the value of imports declined to 1.0 million dollars in 1954 and to 0.2 million dollars in 1955. This state of affairs continued for some time without, however, any major change. In 1956, exports to China were valued at 15.9 million dollars as against imports of 6.5 million dollars. The year 1957 showed some improvement and recorded export of Pakistani goods amounting to 9.5 million dollars as against an import of 7.8 million dollars of Chinese goods.

The relations took a turn for the better when on January 4, 1963, the first formal Sino-Pak trade agreement was signed. The agreement provided "most-favoured-nation treatment" to each other in respect of commerce and shipping. It was agreed upon that Pakistan would import metals, steel products, coal, cement, machinery, chemicals, raw materials, and cereals, while China would take jute, cotton textiles, sports goods, hides and skins. This was the first major concession made by China as during this period Peking was badly in need of allies following the bitter self-imposed isolation from the international socialist community and the Afro-Asian world. Pakistan was the only nation, aligned with the West and the CENTO and SEATO to have secured such concessions from Peking. This was obviously in acknowledgement of the unstinted Pakistani support to Peking in the Western lobbies against India in regard to the 1962 conflict and various other matters.

The upshot of this was a sudden spurt in trade between the two countries. In 1963-64, the total export to China amounted

to Rs 166.6 million and the import was worth Rs 41.30 million in the same year.

It may not be totally irrelevant to mention here that in 1964 when Sino-Pak trade relations were at its peak, Pakistan conducted brisk trade with Israel. Tel Aviv purchased goods (mainly jute) worth 66,000 dollars from Pakistan, according to Israeli official figures. In the first half of 1964, Pakistan also imported goods valuing at 25,000 dollars from Israel.²

While this aspect of trade relations was the least surprising in Pakistan's case, admirers of China felt, perhaps, somewhat uneasy. Subsequent disclosures on China's trade relationship with the most cruel dictatorial regimes, and Peking's so-called sworn enemies reveal that the mercenary character of Pindi and Peking were indistinguishable.

China in its self-interest never had any inhibition to have attractive trade relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). Peking had a turnover of about 283 million dollars with Bonn in 1967. This was approximately six times higher than the trade figures between China and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Next to the FRG, Britain conducted business worth 52 million pounds sterling with Peking in 1969. Similarly, Italy had an over-all trade turnover of 89.6 million dollars during the first nine months of 1969 with China. The volume of Sino-Japanese trade grew by 14 per cent in 1969 as compared to 1968 and totalled 625 million dollars. China's trade through Macao, the Portuguese outpost, fetched Peking Rs 11.25 crores in foreign exchange annually. The Chinese trade against the West also did not preclude Peking from stepping up its trade with racist South Africa and importing strategic goods from Britain, as also the US goods via Italy.

There were persistent reports emanating from different sources that the London Export Corporation and the British Council for the Development of International Trade, in collaboration with a number of firms cooperating with the Chinese-British Trade Council made frantic efforts for shipment of modern radio equipment for ships from General Electric Company-Associated Electric Industries for a "client in South Africa."³

²*Statesman*, New Delhi, March 24, 1967.

³*Mainstream*, December 5, 1970.

The *London Times* reported on February 6, 1969, that Peking was taking advantage of the fact that aircraft manufacturers in Britain considered trade in military equipment to be good business and were willing to sell this equipment wherever they could, so long as the Government has not banned such sales.

Several West German concerns were also supplying Peking various strategic goods through different channels. These firms include Degusse, Telefunken, Siemens, Ferrothal, and they exported to Peking, among other things, computers, vacuum units for producing super-clean elements, remote control units, precision equipment, radio-electronic equipment for communication and control, steel framework for atomic reactors, rare metals such as platinum and cobalt.

It was this characteristic of China which compelled it to develop relations with Pakistan more for political than any other reasons for strengthening Pakistan's economy. Peking took little interest in making Pakistani economy viable and self-reliant. The then Deputy Chairman of Pakistan Planning Commission, M.M. Ahmed, had to rub his nose in the dust to convince the intractable Peking leaders that Pakistani people expected a lot from the Chinese friends and wanted to achieve self-sufficiency in certain basic products with the Chinese economic assistance. Ahmed made many unsuccessful attempts to get Chinese help for building up basic and heavy industries in Pakistan for which it was totally dependent upon the Western countries and the USA.

The Chinese leaders had attached more significance to political matters instead. Commenting on a statement of the Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Trade, Chia Shih, during his visit to Pakistan in 1967, *Pakistan Observer* pointed out:

Unlike other trade delegations who confine their remarks to commercial subjects, the Chinese team has been outspoken in its support to Pakistan in political matters. In fact, Mr. Shih has made it a point to devote main part of his speeches to political affairs. Perhaps, he is carrying out Chairman Mao's behest to put politics in command of everything.

It was during this visit of the Chinese Minister that the Pakistani officials, after hard bargaining, received assurances

of a long-term trade agreement between the two countries which could contribute to Pakistan's shattered economy in an effective manner. Pakistan also painstakingly tried to make China agree to import manufactured and semi-manufactured goods in exchange of sophisticated Chinese products. A strong plea was made for opening a joint shipping line.

The much-publicised "silk route" between Gilgit and Sinkiang was more of a symbolic value rather than being economically viable or significant.

It is also a fact that Pakistan did not always gain from its trade with China. Pakistan, for instance, was importing coal from China at 250 per cent higher cost than the price at which it was available from India a few years ago. East Bengal, now Bangladesh, alone was incurring an additional expenditure of Rs 60 lakhs annually to meet the increased cost of imported coal for the railways, waterways, power plants, etc. Pakistan had to pay Rs 68 per tonne for the 250,000 tonnes of coal imported from China in 1968-69 as against the Indian supply price of Rs 38 per tonne before the Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1965.

The Chinese, like all shrewd businessmen, were aware of these snags and as sops offered to build up a few industries. A paper-pulp complex in East Bengal and a giant heavy machinery plant at Taxila in West Pakistan are the two important projects set up by the Chinese. It should also be noted here that it was always West Pakistan which enjoyed the better share of everything including the Chinese aid.

It was not before 1965 that China offered for the first time an interest-free loan of 60 million dollars for Pakistan's economic development. The loan in 1957 amounted to 40 million dollars and 42 million dollars in 1968.

A significant feature of the Chinese aid was that Peking meekly endorsed Pindi's policy of discrimination against East Bengal in matters of foreign aid. Out of the 60 million dollars given by China to Pakistan in 1965, East Bengal got a paltry sum of 125,000 dollars which, too, was to be repaid by East Bengal through its export of jute and jute products. This was notwithstanding the fact that although East Bengal earned 60 per cent of foreign exchange for Pakistan, it received only 30 per cent of foreign assistance.

Similarly, a major part of the new Chinese loan of 207 million dollars negotiated by Yahya Khan in November 1970 was earmarked for West Pakistan. Out of this loan, 20 million dollars were to be given in cash and to be used to help ease financial difficulties. A sugar mill near the city of Larkana (Bhutto's home town) and a refractory plant in NWFP were to be set up under this financial aid programme in the near future.

The heavy machinery complex at Taxila costing nearly Rs 151,300,000 was expected to go into production by 1970, but a major portion of it still remains to be completed. Construction work for the plant started in 1968. The complex was originally designed to produce complete plants for factories and sugar mills, earth-moving equipment, low-pressure boilers, heavy-duty overhead travelling cranes, drawhooks and couplings for railways and steel structures. It was, however, decided later that the complex would be used for producing many kinds of heavy machinery and armaments of various types.

The requirements of defence equipment have always been given top priority by Pakistan's military regime as in the case of Taxila complex. Friendship with China was used for procuring arms by Pakistan. Though details of Chinese military aid have been kept a close-guarded secret, reports have been appearing from time to time in world press in this connection. These reports indicate that although Pakistan had succeeded in procuring a large number of modern weapons, including military aircraft, tanks, and machine-guns from China, it was far below the quantities asked for.

One of the dominating factors behind the Chinese encouragement to military build-up could be the reason that like Pakistan, the Chinese ruling hierarchy was heavily influenced by army personnel. Mao's doctrine has, of course, always contributed a great deal to give such a character to the higher echelons. The army's share, according to a report in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, in the Central Committee had gone up from a quarter before 1956 to 45 per cent after the onset of the cultural revolution. Provincial representation of the armed forces in the Central Committee has gone up from 2 per cent to 25 per cent.⁴ The CPC Politburo has 21 full members,

⁴*Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 3, 1970.

A *Times of India* report from Dacca in 1966 disclosed that Pakistan and China had entered into a secret agreement for building up East Bengal's defences jointly. The report, quoting authoritative sources in Dacca, stated that according to an agreement reached during the Chinese President Liu Shao-chi's visit to Pakistan in March 1966, a military supply mission came from Peking to study the nature of defence equipment in use and suitable for Pakistan. While arms and artillery arrived in substantial quantities as a result of this arms deal, Chinese Army staff officers sought to reorganise the Pakistan Army in East Bengal on the Chinese pattern.

It must be pointed out here that the subtle gesture of China for making East Bengal's defence strong, went hand in hand with conceit. There were continuous flow of reports that East Bengal was left free for Chinese machinations as a *quid pro quo* for its support to the military junta. Speaking at a public meeting in Dacca, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman in early 1966 demanded an answer to the knotty question: "Why the East Pakistanis could not be helped at the national crisis in September 1965?" Referring to Bhutto's speech in the National Assembly about China's defence of East Bengal, Rehman, in a sharp attack on the protagonists of the "strong centre," remarked that the defence and security of East Bengal could "never depend either on West Pakistan or on a foreign country." This apprehension on the part of the Bengalis, it may be noted, was one of the reasons for their outcry for more autonomy for strengthening East Bengal's defence with an army in which the sons of the soil would command majority.

The Institute for Strategic Studies of London disclosed that Pakistan had struck an arms deal with China in 1967 valued at 120 million dollars. In its annual survey of 1967-68, the Institute stated that the deal involved delivery of 100 T-59 tanks 80 MiG-19 and 10 IL-28s to Pakistan.

supplied, "MiG-19 aircraft, T-59 tanks, and an unspecified number of military lorries." The daily was of the view that "the question whether the Chinese will want some form of *quid pro quo* for their substantial moral and material support does not appear to worry the Government or the average Pakistani."⁵

Neither Pakistan nor China strove to direct this collusive military-economic bond to noble ends. It became a menace to the people of Pakistan as it was painfully witnessed in Bangladesh. Since the Pakistani marauders unleashed the campaign of mass slaughter and destruction in East Bengal from March 25, 1971, reports have been pouring in from different sources about the Chinese military supplies to West Pakistani hordes. Yahya Khan himself had also spoken about the generous Chinese assistance of arms and money.

In an exclusive interview to *Newsweek*, Yahya Khan confidently hoped: "We will get all the weapons and ammunition we need, short of physical intervention," from China. General Yahya Khan, however, made it clear that Pakistan would not receive the same treatment from the Russians which, in his opinion, would try to prevent the tense situation from escalating into a war. Enquired by the *Newsweek* correspondent, Yahya Khan informed that Pakistan would not face any difficulty whatsoever to obtain spares from Peking for the 100 MiG-19s supplied by China already.⁶

The turmoils in Pakistan had never disturbed China and it always stood firmly on the side of the ruling hierarchy although an overwhelming majority of the Pakistani people continuously questioned its *bona fides*. Peking as a genuine friend of Pakistan carefully avoided to identify itself with the detractors of the ruling clique, and unswervingly gave it all possible economic and political support. Both Peking and Pindi were convinced that the *sine qua non* of the Sino-Pak friendship was mutual help and reciprocity of political support, irrespective of prevailing situation in the two countries and the roles of the ruling class in them. At the present juncture, therefore, China unlike the USA which maintained a posture of apparent concern for the millions of hapless refugees and also funnelled arms

⁵London Times, April 15, 1968.

⁶International Herald Tribune, Paris, November 1, 1971.

and ammunition to West Pakistan to continue the slaughtering frenzy, continued to channel economic and military aid to Pakistan. The *Pakistan Times* reported on June 15 that China had agreed to extend 70 million dollars worth of commodity assistance immediately to Pakistan to meet some of its urgent import requirements. The list of commodities included coasters for use in East Bengal to hound the liberation forces. The economic assistance was supplemented by full political support too.

It is also interesting to note that Maulana Bhasani in his appeal to Chairman Mao for help complained that "Yahya's military government is mercilessly and brutally slaying the innocent, unarmed, helpless peasants, labourers, students, intelligentsia, women and children of Bangladesh..."¹⁰

This allegation of Bhasani was reiterated in his talks with some local and foreign correspondents somewhere in a liberated area of Bangladesh on June 2, 1970. In reply to a query he said that China's friendliness with the military junta of Islamabad was a strange politics.¹¹ Maulana Bhasani's assertions were testified by *Washington Daily News* which reported on June 30, 1971 that the US State Department admits that "China has never stopped furnishing weapons to Pakistan." Similarly, *Newsweek* magazine quoting a US diplomat disclosed that, "Pakistan has some promises from Peking to take military action of its own should war begin..."¹²

Chinese complicity in the Indo-Pak war was nakedly demonstrated by the use of Chinese tanks and other military equipment by the Pakistan Army. A number of Chinese T-59 tanks were captured by the Indian soldiers during the recent 14-day Indo-Pak military conflagration. The Director of Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis in a recent survey disclosed that China has supplied Pakistan so far infantry and artillery equipment for two divisions (AK-47 rifles, light and medium machine-guns, 60 mm, 81 mm, 121 mm mortars and 100 field-guns) and 225 T-59 medium tanks. Pakistan has also received from China one squadron of IL-28 bombers,

¹⁰ *Bangladesh Documents*, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, 1971 p. 300.

¹¹ *National Herald*, New Delhi, June 3, 1971.

¹² *Newsweek*, August 2, 1971.

and four squadrons of MiG-19 interceptors. There have also been reports of the Chinese supply of an unspecified number of river-boats and coasters since March 1971 to Pakistan.¹³

The Chinese Consul-General in Pakistan said in Karachi on October 6, 1971: "Pakistan could rest assure that the Chinese people would remain their reliable friends for ever."¹⁴ It was quite obvious from this that Peking would translate its words of assurance into concrete action. British conservative newspaper *Daily Mail* reported from Dacca that two hundred Chinese experts in guerilla warfare had been flown into East Bengal to train Pakistani forces fighting there. The paper reported that the Chinese experts came in response to an urgent plea from Yahya Khan. This makes it amply clear that Peking gave more credence to Yahya Khan's flunkeyism than the cries of agony of the millions suffering in East Bengal. The British paper also informed that China was planning to build an arms, ammunition and aircraft factory in Dacca next year.¹⁵

¹³*Illustrated Weekly*, December 26, 1971.

¹⁴Press handout, Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, October 7, 1971.

¹⁵UNI, October 29, 1971.

CHAPTER NINE

Pakistan's Friends and Allies

AS THE TEMPO of the anti-Ayub upsurge grew, the Chinese gradually came out in their true colours. They went far beyond diplomatic niceties and showed unabashed partiality for the Ayub regime to safeguard the Sino-Pak entente. The Maoists did not mind to sacrifice the revolutionary forces in Pakistan. The followers of Mao Tse-tung like Bhasani and Bhutto were encouraged by the Chinese to step up their splitting activities in the opposition ranks. (Bhutto was unceremoniously dismissed by Ayub Khan in early 1966 due to his hysteric war mania and disparaging attack against the government). Important Chinese leaders, in their speeches and comments continued to shower praises on the Ayub regime. Though millions were starving and jobless, thousands were being incarcerated and several hundreds were brutally killed by Ayub's thugs, the Chinese dignitaries continued extending unreserved support to the Ayub government and paying tributes to his leadership for attaining "speedy economic progress."

The Vice-President of the China-Pakistan Friendship Association, in an article on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Pakistan Day on March 23, 1966, wrote: "After the independence of Pakistan, the Pakistani people under the leadership of Ayub Khan have scored in the last few years delightful achievements."¹

¹*Dawn*, March 23, 1966.

This statement, many would agree, was a travesty of truth. The real conditions of the working people in Pakistan were far from being delightful. The average monthly income of a working class family in East Bengal was then only Rs 78 per month per family or an average income per head of Rs 17 as against the monthly average per head income of Rs 17.4 in West Pakistan. Along with industrial development, the inequality between the rich and poor became greater. While apparently there was a marginal improvement in the minimum earnings of workers and peasants, cost of living rose much higher resulting in the decrease in actual wages. Due to the concentration of wealth in a few hands, exploitation of the poor was much more cruel than before. According to a well-known Pakistani economist, Rehman Shobhan, "34.5 per cent of the urban income was earned in the top 10 per cent of the urban tax paying population whereas only 23.5 per cent of urban income was earned by 50 per cent of the urban people."

While this was the actual condition of the poor people which compelled them to turn against Ayub Khan, the representatives of the Chinese working class, during their visits to Pakistan, were all praise for the Pakistani rulers. Wang Chieh, the leader of a Chinese labour delegation during his visit to Pakistan in October 1966, said at a public meeting in Lyallpur:

Pakistan had made impressive progress during a short span of time and its achievement in various fields of national economy provided a bright future for the people. He added, that a strong and prosperous Pakistan could play an important role in stabilising peace in Asia. The Chinese trade union leader said that during his tour of West Pakistan, he noted that workers were imbued with a spirit of self-reliance and were determined to strengthen the economy of their country.²

This assessment ignored the discontent prevailing among the large section of Pakistani population. In West Pakistan alone,

²*Pakistan Times*, March 31, 1966, referred to by Tariq Ali.

more than 25 per cent of labour force was unemployed. Economic situation in East Bengal was still worse. The talk of industrial progress and self-reliance was so out of tune that it generated suspicion that the Chinese leaders were deliberately indulging in blatant lies. The concentration of wealth in a very few hands was perhaps the highest in the world. "Two-thirds of private industrial investment is controlled by individuals and families drawn from a few trading communities," wrote a Pakistani economist in *Forum* weekly on April 25, 1970. Foreign assistance formed 26 per cent of the total investments in the Third Plan of Pakistan. Pakistan failed to achieve self-sufficiency in food. The agricultural sector contributed less than 50 per cent of the Gross National Product, but 85 per cent of the Pakistani population lived in rural areas. While Chieh invented that "workers were imbued with a spirit of self-reliance," the noted economist Gustav Papanek said that, "Their (entrepreneurs') behaviour was not too different from their robber-baron counterparts of the nineteenth century Western industrialisation."

The certificate of the Chinese friends was, however, believed to be genuine, was able to give the impression that people were unjustified in their agitation against the Ayub Government. People were indirectly told through this acclamation that since the Ayub regime was friendly to China, they were wrong in raising their voice against it. Needless to say, Maulana Bhasani had been consistently harping on this theme since his return from Peking. It became clear that the Sino-Pak friendship could be appreciated only by those who blindly followed Ayub's policies.

Abdul Monem Khan, former Governor of East Bengal and one of the most notorious dictatorial rulers, was welcomed in Peking in October 1966. (Monem Khan was later shot dead by the Mukti Bahini at his residence in Dacca). Welcoming Monem Khan, Chen Yi assured unequivocally :

Whatever changes may take place on the continent of Asia or in its subcontinent we believe that Sino-Pakistan friendship will not change. The peoples of China and Pakistan will unite still further and remain friendly from generation to generation.³

³*Asian Recorder*, 1966.

China totally aligned itself with the Pindi outfit and it could not afford the luxury of any strain in the mutual relations. The interests of the people of Pakistan was of no material consequence for China. It fully endorsed, on the other hand, the Pindi rulers' claim that national interests could not be defended without being completely subservient to the USA and CENTO and SEATO partners. Peking leaders were interested in safeguarding their long-term interests by strengthening the Sino-Pak entente. They did not want to burn their fingers by unnecessarily demonstrating their revolutionary fervour in expressing solidarity with the anti-Ayub fighters. "Militant friendship" was a matter of reciprocity only with the privileged section in Pakistan or those who had a sort of vested interest in the Ayub Government, as is evident by Captain Gohar Ayub's mission of friendship to China in May 1967.

He was the most appropriate person in Pakistan to carry the message of goodwill to Peking on behalf of his father, President Ayub Khan. (Captain Gohar Ayub made a fabulous fortune under his father's patronage. He was owner of some of the largest industries in Pakistan and a terror to his father's opponents. He ordered brutal repression of the residents of Karachi who did not support his father in the 1965 election). Although Pakistan was seething with discontent, the Pindi rulers did not give up their efforts to improve relations with China. A delegation led by Khwaja Shehabuddin left for Peking to attend the Chinese National Day celebration on October 1, 1967. The Pakistani Minister, according to Peking Radio, was greeted by thousands of revolutionaries and Red Guards carrying placards and portraits of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and President Ayub Khan on his arrival. The delegation presented a copy of Ayub's book, *Friends Not Masters*, to Chairman Mao.

This expression of "militant friendship" was followed up by the visit of a Chinese trade delegation led by Chia Shih. At a luncheon given by the Pakistani Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Shih said with great fanfare:

Under the inspiring leadership of President Ayub, Pakistan had made a remarkable progress in the industrial and agri-

cultural sectors and the day is not far off when Pakistan will achieve complete economic independence.⁴

Only a few close friends of Ayub Khan like the Chinese could praise his rule so highly. It is really astounding why the Chinese dignitaries had to indulge in such deliberate misrepresentation of real facts. Although it was possible for them to maintain diplomatic relations with Pakistan without identifying themselves so crudely with the Ayub's discredited regime, theirs was a miserable attempt to save Ayub Khan from his revolting countrymen by eloquently speaking about his achievements. Their efforts did neither improve Ayub's position nor could it glorify the image of Mao's China. The people of Pakistan were already driven to the last point of their endurance by Ayub Khan's misrule. They learnt how a handful of persons amassed huge wealth under Ayub Khan's economic system about which the Chinese leaders spoke so highly whenever they found an opportunity.

A dispassionate analysis of the Pakistani economy gave a completely different picture in contrast with what the Chinese leaders were trying to impress upon. Gunnar Myrdal's observation made at the end of Ayub's much-publicised Development Decade (1958-68), totally exposed President Ayub Khan. In the name of cleaning the Augean's Stables, he had actually built an empire for his favourites and dependents. The study also revealed that Ayub's economy functioned in such a way that it only helped to make rich richer and the poor poorer. Myrdal, in his book *Asian Drama*, wrote:

Large amounts allotted for development projects benefited financial backers of ruling parties. Inflation was countenanced while the Rupee's high international rate was maintained, distorting priorities and encouraging less essential types of consumption. Large investments took place in residential construction for the upper classes; fortunes were accumulated by building shoddy hotels, running cinemas, moneylending and dealing in import or export licences. Evasion of taxes was rewarded by government subsidies to

⁴*Pakistan Times*, October 23, 1967.

defaulters. Smuggling, black-marketing, auction of licences and permits for replenishing party funds, bribery and corruption were rampant ..⁵

This unhealthy growth of economy forced the majority of people to swell the ranks of opposition in Pakistan and ultimately forced the President to seek an ignominious exit despite China's unreserved support to him as the "most beloved leader" of his people. During the days of anti-Ayub upsurge, when China was helpless, not having been able to intervene physically, it tried through its friends in Pakistan to offer whatever help was possible. There is no doubt that Sino-Pak relations were put on solid foundations during the Ayub administration.

Maulana Bhasani helped Ayub by remaining outside the mainstream of the movement. He indulged in giving quixotic slogans of civil war in Pakistan which actually caused division in the ranks of opposition then uniting them under a common body, Democratic Action Committee formed by almost the entire anti-Ayub forces except the Jamaat-e-Islami fanatics. But the Maulana had to pay a heavy price later for this. He found himself totally isolated when Ayub Khan was ultimately shunted out. Bhasani had perhaps the most shocking experience in his entire political life when he was assaulted by the Jamaat-e-Islami hoodlums in West Pakistan early in 1969, and neither Peking nor Ayub Khan expressed a word of grief or condemnation. He was, on the other hand, shocked to learn that China rushed with a strongly worded statement condemning the attempt on Ayub Khan's life at Peshawar early in 1969. Peking called the attackers "unprogressive and reactionary elements." What is, however, noteworthy here is that the demonstration in which the alleged attempt was made on Ayub's life was organised jointly by the Bhasani wing of West Pakistan NAP and Bhutto's People's Party, and the main slogan of the demonstrators was "Long Live Sino-Pak Friendship," etc.

The news of China's message to Ayub Khan on his safe escape put by the Radio Pakistan was, however, later denied by the Chinese Embassy in Rawalpindi. The contradiction

⁵Myrdal, Gunnar, *Asian Drama*, Vol. I., Harmondsworth, 1963, p. 303.

said that the message did not call the demonstrators "unprogressive and reactionary elements." The contradiction, however, prompted the Pakistani officials to explain that it was an expression of the Chinese desire to keep itself aloof from the controversies of internal politics. The implication of this type of double-standard by Peking, although not new, was that while China congratulated Ayub Khan, it did not want to hurt the feelings of the Chinese followers among the demonstrators. Needless to say, this served the double purpose of satisfying the official circles as well as its not-so-serious adversaries.

At long last Bhasani has reached the wise conclusion that the Chinese love is really abstruse. He was in the thick of Bangladesh liberation struggle and fought shoulder to shoulder with his one-time detractors.

The stresses and strains never dampened the spirit of Sino-Pak friendship. Pakistani rulers never allowed the edge of the friendship to get blunted and wielded it successfully against their restive opponents, using it as an example of the regime's progressive character. China, on its part, was content with Pakistani rulers' patience and cooperation with Peking's indulgence. Assessing the depth of Sino-Pak friendship, the correspondent of *London Times* wrote from Rawalpindi in a dispatch on April 15, 1968:

Reflecting on the flourishing but contradictory friendship between the intractable Marxists of Peking and the bourgeois capitalists of Islamabad, a Pakistani publisher stirs his tea thoughtfully as he watches a group of Chinese diplomats leave a modern American coffee bar.

In Pakistan, he says, never have so many books been distributed to be read by so few. He is referring to the little red book of Chairman Mao's Thoughts which the Chinese Embassy officials hand out to hesitant hands on almost any official occasion.

While Pakistan essentially regards her friendship with China as an insurance or umbrella against an attack from India, she had consolidated relations in the past two years, and today she is receiving a considerable amount of material aid from Chairman Mao, who apparently has chosen to ignore ideological contradictions.

China's interest in Pakistan to gain a military foothold and Pakistan's ambition to win Kashmir and increase its bargaining power with the West and the USA, created an identity of objectives. Peking understood clearly that a military foothold in some strategic areas of Pakistan would give it tremendous advantage to snarl at the Soviet Union and India at appropriate moments.

Relations with Pakistan had already paid rich dividends so far as Sino-US understanding was concerned. The Chinese were clear in their mind that the USA too was deeply interested in Sino-Pak friendship to reach their respective goals. It was, therefore, not astonishing to see that both Washington and Peking praised the Ayub regime in equal measure even at the height of Pindi's ruthless suppression of the popular forces.

It is no secret that at the close of 1968 when anti-Ayub upsurge had crossed all barriers of party politics and assumed an all-embracing character, there was a unique concurrence of opinion between China, Pakistan and USA. The day on which several people were killed by police firing in different parts of Pakistan, the Central Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Khwaja Shehabuddin shrieked at a heavily military-guarded public meeting on November 9, 1968, that "the people were enjoying full democracy in Pakistan like those of any democratic country in the world." The next day President Johnson described Pakistan as "a model of dynamic developments under the wise and constructive leadership of President Ayub."⁶ This was also the time when General Yahya Khan, the then Chief of Pakistani Army, was visiting Peking with a large entourage. General Huang Yung Sheng, the Chief of People's Liberation Army, rising to new heights of amity told General Yahya Khan on November 10, 1968 :

Friendship and cooperation between our two countries have been growing constantly over the last few years and there has been increasing friendly contacts between the armed forces of our two countries...in recent years, the Pakistani people under the leadership of President Ayub Khan, have fought unrelentingly to safeguard national independence.⁷

⁶*Pakistan Times*, November 11, 1968.

⁷*Ibid.*

There was, thus, a general agreement between China and USA that Ayub's leadership was essential for Pakistan's progress and friendship with Peking and Washington. These identical statements issued seemingly on the same wavelengths condemned the popular fury as ill-timed and wrongly conceived. Democratic rights of the people were subordinated to the friendship of China and USA for Pakistan's survival. Good relations with Peking and Washington was a perfect panacea for reaching the cherished goals of Pakistani people, both Peking and Washington haughtily claimed. None of them was interested in upsetting the strategy chalked out over the past two decades, and when Ayub Khan could no more be saved from public wrath, they succeeded in bringing their another favourite, General Yahya Khan, at the helm of affairs in Pakistan on March 25, 1969, in a bloodless coup. General Yahya Khan was already in the good books of Peking and Washington and it was not difficult for him to follow the footsteps of his predecessor, Ayub Khan.

There was no change in the arrangements. Pakistan under the stewardship of General Yahya Khan continued to pine for Chinese intimacy and devour lavish US military and economic assistance. The officially influenced *Pakistan Times*, in an editorial on the occasion of China's National Day on October 1, 1970, paid glowing tributes to Mao's "inspiring and dynamic leadership" and pleaded for China's early entry into the UN, while strongly arguing for a Sino-US detente. Yahya Khan, too, in a message of felicitation to Premier Chou En-lai, expressed his conviction that the close ties of friendship and good-neighbourly relations which existed between the two countries "will continue to develop in the years ahead...."⁵ President Yahya Khan sent one of his cronies, General Atiqur Rahman, the Governor of Punjab, to Peking as his representative to be present on the occasion of China's 21st anniversary celebrations. The Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army, General Abdul Hamid Khan, also led a delegation to China to represent Pakistan at the 1970 May Day celebrations in Peking. In February 1970, Kuo Mo-jo visited Pakistan and assured Peking's full support and cooperation to the Islamabad

⁵Ibid, October 1, 1970.

brigands on the so-called "Kashmir" question against India.

Most significant of all these pilgrimages of Pakistani army top brass was the five-day state visit of President Yahya Khan to China in early November 1970. The visit, preceded by the President's trip to Washington and the unprecedented cyclone havoc in East Bengal, was also significant for political reasons. Only a month after this visit, Pakistan was to go for General Elections based on adult franchise for the first time in the history of its 23 years of independence. It was too obvious that the far-sighted Peking leaders were keen to know how things were shaping in Pakistan and whether Yahya Khan's head would ultimately escape unscathed. Interestingly enough, there was a conspicuous silence in China over this important event in the life of over 120 million Pakistanis. There was no mention of the elections for ushering in a democratic rule in Pakistan in any joint Sino-Pak communique or statement issued during or after Yahya Khan's visit. (It may be mentioned here that Peking Radio ran a constant campaign in favour of Ayub Khan during the 1965 Presidential elections). There was, on the other hand, special emphasis on the struggle of the Kashmiri people for self-determination and on invectives at the imaginary enemies like India and the Soviet Union. The Peking leaders consciously maintained silence over the memorable event in Pakistan's life when the people were for the first time going to break the shackles of fake democracy and decide their destiny themselves.

Welcoming President Yahya Khan's visit, the Peking *People's Daily* reiterated the Chinese people's gratitude for Pakistani support and assured that they would, as in the past, "firmly support the Pakistani people in their just struggle for defending state sovereignty and national independence and firmly support the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for the right of self-determination." "The Chinese people will remain forever the reliable friends of the Pakistani people," the daily declared.*

Several articles appeared in the Pakistani press also to mark the occasion. One of the commentators, Marghub Siddiqui, writing on the issue, observed :

*Ibid., November, 10, 1970

China is an ally in peace and war. In peace, it has shown willingness to contribute both know-how and material to Pakistan's economic development retarded by harsh and exacting terms under which Western assistance had been available in past; and in war it accorded unconditional and all-out support, as was demonstrated by it in the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war.¹⁰

The official circles had wisely thought that Chinese friendship was indispensable, especially on the eve of election, which was sure to deal a mortal blow to the regime. A recapitulation of the relationship was badly necessary for both the countries in order not to lose heart in the hour of trial and reanimate their close bonds. Dutiful protagonists like Suleri, demonstrating their precision and acumen, joined the official camp to make the Sino-Pak friendship shine in a new glory.

Suleri's pen put in black-and-white in the pages of *Pakistan Times*, that "friendship with China is the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy." This non-official spokesman of the regime, popularly known as "the Cleopatra of the Pakistan Press," asserted that the rivalry between India and China in Asia was a compelling factor for Peking's coming closer to Pakistan in the matter of "our deadly dispute with India" and "endorsing our policy on Kashmir." Another deciding factor, Suleri stated, was China's genuine interest in Pakistan's viability and capability in "all fields of confrontation with India."

Suleri in his observations contended that "there is a greater identity of interests between Islamabad and Peking than there is with Washington and Moscow." He persuasively argued that "this is a truth which cannot be underrated by the seemingly absolute terminology of bilateralism... no government in Pakistan can go against the requirements of the country's basic and compulsive interests," Suleri affirmed.¹¹

It is in this background that one must judge, not so sensational air dash of Peking's old chum, Bhutto, to China and the grandiloquence of China's Foreign Minister. China has

¹⁰*Ibid.*, November, 10, 1970.

¹¹*Ibid.*, November, 8, 1970.

done utmost to save the skin of its friends in Islamabad. Pakistani rulers too have rediscovered their friends and critics. Bhutto once in his usual exuberance uttered some sensible words: "The Chinese were Pakistan's friends but the Americans were Pakistan's allies."¹² Both friends and allies have indeed proved their real worth by helping Yahya Khan to wade through the rivers of blood of millions in Bangladesh only to ditch him when the chips were down and to replace him with Bhutto in the same manner as they had replaced Ayub Khan.

¹²*Hindustan Times*, March 20, 1963

Epilogue

WHEN CHAIRMAN MAO smiled benignly at M. Richard Nixon on February 21, thousands had gathered at the *Shahid Minar* (*Martyrs' Column*) in Dacca to pay homage to the memory of their immortal comrades fallen in the soul-searing language movement and the national liberation struggle. The two events might be a sheer coincidence. But it would be difficult to gloss over their significance.

The Nixon-Mao parleys might have been the outcome of the US President's intuition about the inscrutable enigma of the smiling Chairman and his characteristic sense of reciprocity in the light of the crumbling might of imperialism. But the people of Bangladesh, while observing the *Martyrs' Day* for the first time as citizens of a sovereign, independent country, would recall with anguish the roles played by both Washington and Peking during their long arduous struggle against Pakistan rulers from the time of language movement in 1952. As is now well known, the language movement, to secure for Bengalee the status of official language at par with Urdu, which started immediately after the creation of Pakistan in 1947, paid its first price when 19 young students were mowed down in Dacca alone by the police on February 21, 1952. The language movement since then formed the nucleus of the struggle for regional autonomy for the Bengalee, culminating in the full-fledged national liberation struggle of 1970-71. During the years since 1952 many more lives were lost. Both Peking and Washington contributed their share in this by their direct and indirect encouragement to those forces which knew only to answer the popular demands with bullets and bayonets.

In the early fifties, when the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan heatedly debated the question of introducing a federal structure in the country and East Bengal (now Bangladesh) legitimately claimed its rightful share of power in the national affairs by virtue of its numerical majority and richer natural resources, the landlord-bureaucratic oligarchy in the Western wing fought tooth and nail against such an arrangement. The ruling elite, representing the US and British monopoly interests in Pakistan, foresaw their immediate doom under a popular democratic set-up led by the Bengalis. Since then they resorted to unheard of repression and finally even genocide against the Bengalis to prevent the popular forces from taking up the reins of Government in Pakistan.

This was the time when the Bengalis had made a tryst with destiny and embarked on the arduous path of a liberation struggle which led to the inevitable victory. The landlord-bureaucratic complex in Pakistan was constantly aided by the US schemers and pampered by the Maoists against popular discontent. During the last two decades, Peking and Washington used all their skills to induce the successive dictatorial regimes of Pakistan to put down Bengali resurgence with black terror. Their last desperate bid to save Yahya Khan by drowning the Bangladesh rebellion in blood ended in the unceremonious demolition of the edifice which both Peking and Washington painstakingly built up as a monument to Sino-US friendship.

It is in this background that when the people of Bangladesh assembled at the *Shahid Minar* to rededicate themselves to the task of redeeming the unfulfilled pledges of their comrades in order to honour their obligation to history and the national liberation struggles of the world, they also pledged to defend their motherland from any possible conspiracy being hatched at the Peking summit. The people of Bangladesh have realised from their own experience that the two world powers confabulating in Peking have already committed to an agreed line of action. The summit at Peking thus bears a special significance for the people of Bangladesh. It is but natural that the 75 million people would be on guard to defend their freedom won at the cost of blood and toil of numberless men, women and children, old and young, against any conspiracy that might have taken shape during the exercises in the

Sino-US negotiations. Bangladesh having acquired its maturity through the cataclysmic experience of the past years, will have little difficulty in understanding the meaning of Premier Chou En-lai's threat of "no tranquillity on the subcontinent." (Interview with Neville Maxwell, *Sunday Times*, December 5, 1971).

As have been shown in the preceding chapters, neither Peking nor Washington were agreeable to replacing the reactionary ruling clique of Pakistan. The emergence of Bangladesh has upset their grandiose plans in South and South-East Asia. It is with this in view that Nixon had come to Peking all the way to seek readjustments and modifications of the earlier strategies and tactics. While the real worth of the "paper tiger" in the heart of the Chinese capital and the huge screaming streamers displayed at Peking's boulevards become fairly clear with their quick disappearance, one cannot just dismiss the implications of the summit between the two so-called sworn enemies.

It was also noteworthy indeed that Chou En-lai shook his hands warmly with Nixon in spite of the former's own mortifying experience of being refused a handshake by the late John Foster Dulles during the negotiations in Geneva on the truce in Vietnam and Laos over a decade ago.

Take for instance, the installation of large banners inscribing strident denunciation of the "social imperialist Soviet Union" coming as a finishing touch to Nixon's red-carpet welcome to Peking. This is a positive indication of one of the several objectives of the Nixon-Mao tete-a-tete. Similarly, Nixon's declaration that "China's readiness to talk about its role in Asia is one among other reasons for attaching much importance to my visit to Peking," highlights the pivotal issues of the Peking conclave. The visit of President Bhutto to Peking only a few weeks earlier, cleared the decks for President Nixon and the Chinese leaders to give finishing touches to the Pindi-Peking-Washington plans in South and South-East Asia.

It is in this context that one must view the role of these two powers during the recent 14-day Indo-Pak War in order to understand the significance of this year's observance of the *Martyrs' Day* in Bangladesh better. The issue of Bangladesh is inseparable from any appraisal of the Sino-US role in this

subcontinent. It was during the liberation struggle of Bangladesh that the world powers came out in their true colours. It is with this in view that I referred to the correlation between President Nixon's visit to Peking and the observance of *Martyrs' Day* on the same day.

Since the onset of pogroms in Bangladesh in March 1971, the US and Chinese acts of omissions and commissions have found a rare harmony. The coordination culminated in the spectacular solidarity between the two in the UN Security Council and General Assembly debates over the Indo-Pak War of December 1971. Both stood firmly for maintaining the so-called integrity of Pakistan and combined to brand India as an "aggressor" for the act of its responding to the request for help from the Bangladesh Provisional Government. The specific charge was that of "interference" in the internal affairs of another country.

While Joseph Sisco, the US Assistant Secretary of State, is on record to have asserted that "our policy is to preserve the territorial integrity of Pakistan," the Chinese representative, Fu Hao, demanded in the UN General Assembly Humanitarian and Cultural Committee on November 21, 1971 that "the interference in Pakistan's internal affairs must be stopped first of all." The Chinese representatives had also asserted that the unity of Pakistan was essential for Pakistan's prosperity. From this judgement, it was obvious that China would accuse the freedom-fighters in Bangladesh as "rebels" and "splitters" of Pakistan. China, however, deliberately avoided pointing out that Pakistan's integrity could not be maintained by denying the Bengalis, who were in majority, their due share in the country's affairs—domestic and external. Peking also preferred not to look into the causes which turned the Bengalis into "rebels" and "splitters."

The Sino-US cooperation with Yahya Khan was aimed at denying the people of Bangladesh their legitimate right of self-determination. A recognition of that right against the oppressive military junta would have signalled not only the end of the ruling clique in Pakistan but also the failure of Peking and Washington's policy of shaping Pakistan into a monstrous ogre to snarl at India at every opportune moment. Beheading of this ogre by the Bengalis was, therefore, considered a severe blow to

Peking and Washington plans. They decided not to take any chances and resorted to blatant intimidation against India because of her commitment to uphold the cause of the oppressed Bengalis.

Jack Anderson's disclosures in the *New York Times*, have revealed that during the movement of the Seventh Fleet in the Bay of Bengal, a CIA report said that "according to reliable clandestine sources, General Yahya Khan had claimed that the Chinese ambassador in Islamabad had assured him that within 72 hours the Chinese Army will move towards the Indo-Pak border." The CIA also reported, according to the same source, that the Chinese were gathering weather data since December 8 along the Himalayan areas, presumably to determine whether the passes leading into India were fordable through the snows. These reports, actually emanating from the Pentagon and the White House, not only provide ample proof of the close links between USA and China during the Indo-Pak War but also called the Chinese bluff about non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. In fact, both Peking and Washington aligned with each other intimately with every aspect of Pakistan's internal affairs in order to extricate Yahya Khan from the morass of blunders committed by Pakistan in connivance with its friends and allies during the last 23 years.

With this idea in mind China welcomed a high-powered Pakistani delegation led by Bhutto in early November last year in Peking. While the delegation was, by its very character, an arms-seeking mission, consisting of almost all the Chiefs of Staffs of the Pakistan armed forces, Bhutto's leadership of the delegation fully exposed the so-called enmity between him and Yahya Khan. Bhutto has been and remains a favourite of both USA and China and it may not be a surprise if one day it is revealed that he was catapulted into power with the active cooperation of Peking and Washington when they realised that Yahya Khan had lost his utility as a suitable prop in this subcontinent.

The purpose of Bhutto's visit on behalf of Yahya Khan at the height of tension on the borders could be easily gathered from his own announcement on the conclusion of the visit: "We are now in full preparedness to maintain our territorial

integrity against foreign aggression." (Reuter, Islamabad, November 8, 1971.)

China's deep interest in Pakistan's affairs was also reflected in Bhutto's admission that "there was a complete identity of views on all the points discussed," between them. What the points of discussion could be, needed no speculation and were revealed in course of the Indo-Pakistan military conflagration from December 3 to 16, 1971.

Thus the USA and Chinese interests were identical perhaps due to the fact that both had made equal contributions towards Pakistan's ills and hence all the efforts to bail out Pakistan and save their own skins.

Peking made a farce of its own policies by declaring from the podiums of the UN that China was the true defender of small and medium nations against the domination of super-powers, and that China would never pursue great-power policy aims. But China's activities in regard to Bangladesh liberation struggle in cooperation with USA are an eloquent testimony to the fact that Peking has discarded its own high-sounding declarations. By vying with the USA in extending support to Yahya Khan, Peking has only proved that its perseverance for emerging into a great power is exemplary. Denouncement of the Bangladesh liberation struggle as "secessionist," had led China to the same position as that of the USA, the vilest enemy of all national liberation struggles in the world. Through its cooperation with USA, China isolated itself from the mainstream of the world democratic and progressive forces which upheld the right of the Bengalis to self-determination.

Opposition to the Bangladesh people's struggle was a repudiation of China's own stand in regard to national liberation struggles. It would be quite pertinent to pose before the Chinese the question that if Peking could commit its full-throated support to the so-called Pakistani people's just struggle against foreign aggression in Kashmir and right to self-determination what prevented Peking from giving support to the 75 million people of Bangladesh. The Bengalis' fight was for self-determination and national liberation against the West Pakistani oppression and tyranny. Only plausible explanation of the Chinese stand could be that Peking's support to national liberation struggles has not been consistent. In other words,

China supported only those struggles which did not jeopardise the interests of Peking and served its policy aims.

A 1970 study of the Peking's queer claim of support to national liberation struggles made by Peter Van Ness of the University of California, showed that the Maoists were very selective in their official endorsements of specific struggles. It was revealed that in 1965 Peking could approve of only 23 movements out of a possible of 120 such cases. The author was of the view that Peking's selection of the targets of revolution was mostly prompted by the policies pursued by the foreign states towards China and not by political conditions prevailing in a particular country or the ideological and military strategy of local revolutionary organisations.

Peking consciously avoided those states in selecting the targets of revolution which were friendly with itself despite the existence and possibility of such movements. Peter Van Ness in his analysis contended that eighteen independent countries endorsed by Peking for their national liberation struggles were found rating high in hostility to Peking in their state policy.

Peking's fulminations against the Mukti Bahini of Bangladesh and its full support to General Numeri of Sudan in slaughtering the Communist revolutionaries there, only underscore the conclusions drawn by Peter Van Ness. It was this banality that led it to describe the Pakistani marauders as "advocates of people's interests." It was the same understanding, bordering on naivette and nonsense, that China extolled the student unrest in France in 1968, as a revolutionary upsurge inspired by Mao's thoughts. (*Peking Review* comments on May 21 and 27, 1968.)

These are only a few classic examples of the crassest opportunism and double-standard policies pursued by China. This policy was thoroughly exposed during the Indo-Pak War when China cried hoarse about the Pakistani people's right to self-determination while the same was stifled within Pakistan itself. The dubious role of China was also demonstrated by the distribution of booklets containing "excerpts from the works of Mao and Lin Piao" among its agents of questionable characters in Bangladesh. On the other hand, China extended full political support and allowed West Pakistani military aircrafts to fly over its territory to sow death and destruction in Bangladesh. An

Associated Press report from Washington on November 4, 1971, said that Pakistan had sent freighters to China and Rumania to fetch arms and ammunition. The agency quoting intelligence reports in Washington said that a Pakistani merchant ship was en route to China to bring artillery pieces, mortars, vehicles and ammunition for Chinese manufactured tanks used by the Pakistanis. Thus it is clear that China's claim of being the true defender of national liberation forces is a downright hoax and does not stand the test of argument and proof.

In regard to non-interference in the affairs of other countries China would surely feel embarrassed if it were to honestly refer to its own repertory. Public memory is not so short, in spite of the Maoists' wish, to forget the charges that were levelled by the Cuban Prime Minister in early 1966 against China. Peking was accused by Fidel Castro of "exerting blackmail, exhortations, pressures and strangulations... and of worst methods of piracy, oppression and filibustering," of "hypocrisy, insolence, absolute contempt, betrayal of confidence and brotherhood, bad faith, cynicism and the worst form of poison." It was also alleged that the Chinese embassy in Havana was systematically distributing vast quantities of propaganda material and was persistently trying to subvert Cuban leaders. (Referred to by K. P. Gupta in "China's Theory and Practice of Intervention," *China Report*, Vol. VIII, No. 6, November-December 1971).

China's record of similar activities in other countries is no less ignominious. Peking's open instigation to the Naxalites in India might, according to Mao's thoughts, stem from its adherence to the principles of revolutionary internationalism, but is a clear example of interference in India's internal affairs. The leading Peking daily, *Jenmin Jihpao*, in an article on June 2, 1967, urged the people of India "to take to arms" and "overthrow the present government." There is also the classic instance of Peking Radio describing the politically motivated anti-cow-slaughter demonstration of Sadhus (Monks), led by the Jana Sangh in Delhi in November 1966 as "revolutionary mass upsurge" of the Indian people. See also *Peking Radio Broadcast* on June 28, 1967 on the Revolutionary Armed Struggle of the Indian people, published in *Mainstream* on July 8, 1967.

On the other hand, there have been a large number of people in this country and elsewhere who wished and expected that in keeping with her highly publicised stance, China would be sympathetic towards the freedom-fighters of Bangladesh. One could legitimately ask: were not the Mukti Bahini guerillas valiant enough to be eminently qualified for Chinese support in their death-defying struggle? After all the sacrifices the fighters in the Mukti Bahini—predominantly youth and students of poor peasant and working class families—should be equally if not more worthy of the cause of freedom when compared to the Chinese-pampered and eulogised Naxalite and Naga rebels. However, by its wholehearted cooperation with Yahya Khan, China's hypocrisy and perversity have been proved to the hilt.

China's logic of non-interference seems more absurd and puerile when one refers to the liberation movements, for instance, in South Africa. The entire progressive world has been unanimous in condemnation of the apartheid and racism in South Africa which technically may be regarded as an internal affair of that country. Should, China, which was no less forthright and vociferous against Vorster's oppression, refrain from its attack on the plea that it is an internal affair of South Africa? It is, however, notable that China has been secretly conducting substantial trade with South Africa. While this may be the Maoist method of expressing solidarity with the toiling and oppressed masses without damaging its own interest, it is certainly not compatible with revolutionary internationalism. China's support to the liberation struggles of the peoples of Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (Bissau) if considered by China's definition of interference may as well go against Peking itself. By the same logic, one would view China's open hostility, not mere indifference, to the Bangladesh liberation struggle as a clear evidence of its rank opportunism.

China's support to the ruling clique in Pakistan against the popular forces in the country was a clear case of interference in the internal affairs of the Pakistani people. China cannot escape from this accusation by talking of Peking's support against "Indian aggression," in order to defend its independence. For China was already hand in glove with Yahya's genocide in Bangladesh long before the Indo-Pak War started. Premier

Chou En-lai had even toasted Pakistan's victory over India at a function in Peking in November 1971. China's "revolutionary solidarity" with Bangladesh people was not forthcoming because of its active support to the Pakistani savagery against them.

Also, none would agree with the Maoists' accusations that the Bengalis were "rebels" and "splitters" just because they wanted to win their right of self-determination which had been denied by the Pakistani military junta. Similarly, very few would be swayed by China's hollow phrase-mongering that the revulsion in Bangladesh was a "handiwork of India and Soviet Union "

The irony of it all was, that China preferred to ignore the rapacious exploitation and oppression of the Bengalis by the blood-thirsty ruling clique in Pakistan which was equally exploiting the weaker national minorities in West Pakistan as well. China's mouthing of revolutionary phrases could never hide the fact that it had been cynically backing this very clique against the people of Pakistan. An explanation for this could be that the Pakistani rulers were the favourites of USA and China as well. It was obviously this which prompted China to denounce the popular upsurge in Bangladesh and direct all its fire against the Soviet Union and India. In following this course, China did not appear to be much embarrassed even after exposing herself as a close ally of the USA.

The only plausible defence for China's conduct and aberrations in its policies in regard to Bangladesh could be that Peking lost itself in the cloud of its hegemonistic and big-power ambitions. The spectre of the success of the Soviet and Indian policies in Bangladesh haunted the Chinese to such an extent that they abandoned their earlier surreptitious moves and chose to openly sail in the same boat with the USA in order to safeguard their interests in Pakistan.

Peking was also guided by the calculations that Bangladesh as a sovereign, independent, secular and democratic state would not be easily vulnerable to the spell of the Maoist China. Peking also realised that Bangladesh, in her own interest would make a common endeavour with the Indian people to pursue similar policies and ideals with a view to strengthening the newly won political and economic indepen-

dence and preserve tranquillity in the subcontinent. China correctly envisaged that the powerful Soviet support and its close cooperation with both India and Bangladesh would always be a significant factor for preserving peace in the subcontinent, for acting as an effective deterrent against outside subversion, and for ensuring speedy socio-economic progress of both these countries. While these calculations heavily weighed in China's decision to step up its acerbity against India and the Soviet Union, the response of Bangladesh government towards the divergent US, Chinese and the Soviet attitudes towards the sub-continent only confirmed Peking's apprehensions.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister in a statement from Mujibnagar in early December last year, said that "the Security Council proceedings have lifted the curtain to unmask the naked anti-people role of the Washington-Peking axis."

Describing it as the "super-menacing role of the two super-powers," he asserted that Washington, the leader of the so-called free-world, has become a shameless partner and an abetter of genocide," while "Peking, a great preacher of Marxism-Leninism and upholder of People's Democracy, on the other hand, has become the greatest supporter of Islamabad military machine to suppress brutally a people's struggle which she herself had to undergo in not-too-distant past."

Referring to the Soviet policy during the critical nine-months, the Bangladesh Foreign Minister stated that :

The 75 million people of Bangladesh hail the commendable pro-people role the USSR has been playing since the day of Pakistan army crackdown in Bangladesh. We gratefully acknowledge the deep sympathy and understanding of our cause that prevail in Moscow. The people of USSR and their government have earned unforgettable admiration for their unyielding pro-people role...." (*Bangladesh, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, December 8, 1971*).

This categorical statement from the elected representatives of Bangladesh dispels any misgivings about their ability to distinguish between the friends and foes, and it affords little scope for any Chinese manoeuvre to win back the sympathies of the Bangladesh people. China was obviously apprehensive of this

eventuality and opted for the company of discredited forces in order to keep up its anti-Indian and anti-Soviet hystrionic fervour. Besides, China's policy of extending its domination over entire Asia had played a crucial role in its anti-Bangladesh role.

As a prominent Communist leader from Bangladesh, Moni Singh, observed recently during an informal discussion with this writer in Delhi, China's decision to extend full support stemmed from its nationalist-chauvinist policy and nobody in Bangladesh was today prepared to approve of Peking's role. "The people in general regarded China's action as betrayal of their cause," Singh pointed out. "China's support to Yahya Khan", according to him, "does not conform with the Marxist-Leninist principles and it was nothing but a clear deviation from them. China's action was also governed by the consideration of enmity against India and the Soviet Union. It was a pure and simple game of power-politics prevailing over ideological commitments of China."

Indignation and adverse reaction of the cross-section of the Bangladesh people are also factors contributing towards the Peking's fawning upon Bhutto and Nixon to pursue their old tactics in a new style as necessitated by the changed situation. This realisation on the part of China might have also forced it to make intriguing noises as well as maintain conspicuous silence in regard to imperialists' machinations, as in the case of the current bombing raids in Vietnam. But the freedom-loving nations all over the world are today wise enough to perceive that Mao's new offensive of smiles held disastrous implications for them.

China is trying to be generous at other's cost. But Peking also believes that charity begins at home! An indication of it may be available from the result of Nixon's sojourn in China. It was pointed out in a commentary in the *International Herald Tribune* on February 2, 1971: "In South-East Asia American policy is desperately trying to find a way to settlement without ignoble collapse and Chinese opposition to such efforts seems to have diminished. But the Russians are urging Hanoi to fight and humiliate the US world image."

In this context of China's new game of super-power politics, it will not be difficult to see that the Maoists have stained the

glorious anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist traditions of the great Chinese people. One is tempted to recall here that the Chinese and the Indian people were joint partners in the upsurge of national liberation movements to overthrow the British colonial rule in Asia during the great epoch of mid-nineteenth century. This was the time when there was popular mass uprisings in India and the Chinese people were also fighting the British heroically in the famous Second Opium War. The movements of the Indian and Chinese people against the British greatly influenced the subsequent liberation movements of all Asian nations. Interestingly, the people of Bangladesh, who were then Indian citizens, synchronised their fight with the Chinese struggle in their common strive for freedom and democracy to eliminate British colonial oppression and economic exploitation.

Referring to the 1857-59 uprisings in India, Marx observed that this nation-wide fight for national emancipation "coincided with a general disaffection exhibited against English supremacy on the part of the great Asian nations, the revolt of the Bengal army being, beyond doubt, intimately connected with Persian and Chinese wars." ("Marx on Revolt of 1857." *India Today*, Vol. II, no. 3, p.23.)

Thus it is clear that the Opium War, waged by the Chinese people against the British and French aggression and the Indian rebellion put a check on their common enemy. Interestingly, the majority of the participants in this common struggle were from Bengal whose sons and grandsons are today the victorious heroes of Bangladesh national liberation struggle. It is in this historical background that the present Maoist leadership of China by condoning Yahya's massacre in Bangladesh has tarnished the glorious saga of anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist traditions of the Chinese people.

The context behind the observance of this year's *Martyrs' Day* in Bangladesh is thus qualitatively different. The people of Bangladesh have not only been betrayed by the Maoists but are today under constant threat of the machinations of Nixon-Mao-Bhutto triumvirate. Bhutto's attempt for defence pacts with China and USA also confirms the machinations against Bangladesh. President Bhutto's attempt to hammer out some sort of "defence pacts" with USA and China are parts of the

same line of action.

It is also to be noted here that it was Nixon, who during his Vice-Presidency played an important part in the conclusion of the US-Pakistan military pact in 1954. According to Selig Harrison, Nixon then at a briefing described the military pact as "an opportunity to build a counterforce to Nehru's neutralism in the Indian leader's own backyard." (*Harper's Magazine*, July 1966). While Nixon has not changed his earlier views, China's aversion to India's continued policy of non-alignment and neutralism is too pronounced to be ignored.

In such a background the banners held aloft by the heroic people of Bangladesh on their Martyrs' Day, to remember the millions of immortal freedom-fighters of Bangladesh on February 21 are of much more revolutionary import for the developments in Asia, than the red banners waved by the Red Guards to welcome President Nixon to Peking. The Maoists have smudged their red banner of revolution with unprincipled actions and betrayal of the national liberation struggle of Bangladesh.

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